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OUR COVER MODEL

Pattern for home dressmakers
Page 38

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[Is that '*someone*' **you?**]

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NEW PERSIL GIVES EXTRA CLEANNESS — EXTRA GENTLY

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YOU BELONG TO *me*

A SHORT STORY BY
STELLA MARTIN CURRY

CLOUDS were holding a regatta in the vast blue estuary of sky. Like fat little boats they ran before the wind, and their shadows moved along the London pavements as along a shore. It was an exciting day. A day for sailing in new seas.

From most of the windows in a shabby house in Hampstead, curtains streamed, but one was bare of curtains. This window had the bloom of newly polished glass, and Rose Suffolk, who had just cleaned it, laid her forehead for a moment against a pane, as if she found the cool touch comforting. She looked out on the gaily moving morning, her eyes blanched as if they were too weary to reflect, as they usually did, the color of the sky.

She stood very still listening to two voices in her mind. It was only a week since she had faced Howard's cold final fury. Fury which had had the bruising and numbing effect of a tornado. She had phoned the evening before to say she would not have dinner with him, and now she could not even remember what family crisis it was that had stopped her.

It was the next day that they had met and parted finally.

"Your impossible family is eating you up," he had said, "and you're letting them do it!"

"But my darling"—at that stage she had still been trying to smile—"I wanted to come, terribly. It was just——"

"Yes, it's always just Margot who might have sprained one of those racehorse ankles. Just Piers, who is upset because one of his plays has come back, and you've got to listen hour after hour to how good he's going to be some day——"

"I think he may be, Howard."

"When you're too worn out to care! And there's Juliet, hysterically selfish and possessive. You're too kind to her. She's not going to be a good enough actress to warrant the amount of time you spend on her. And your mother——"

"Well——"

He had understood just what she meant by that one word. His face was quite old.

"I hate this, Rose. But you'll have to choose."

"Other people have families who need help."

"But nobody else has yours!"

"Nobody belongs to just one person . . ."

"I want you to belong to yourself—and they won't have that. They grab you, grab you, and you let them!"

Rose had, in the long minute that followed, painfully relinquished him.

"I understand you," she had said, "being exasperated by them, but I thought you would understand."

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ILLUSTRATED BY
BOOTHROYD

Rose read the note, aware of her family's eager interest. They had guessed correctly, the flowers were from Howard.

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Everyone needs a PET

By RODERICK LULL

IT wouldn't have been so bad if the rent hadn't been overdue, and Mr. Flewberg, who takes the same view of an indigent tenant as a cat takes of a canary, hadn't been coming that afternoon to collect—or else. After all, I could have eaten the dog food. It said right on the label that it was fit for human consumption. As a dessert possibility, there was the Special Parrot Mix.

Then that nice-looking elderly lady came in.

Perhaps I should explain that I am speaking as owner of the Acme Pet Shop, Anthony Webster, Prop. The shop was an inheritance from my uncle Frederick. It constituted his entire estate; and it was all mine, the will said. The will neglected to say that the deficits would be all mine too.

It had sounded wonderful. I've always been fond of animals. And at the time I heard from the lawyer I was working in a garage. In the time it takes to read a short letter, Tony Webster had become a man of property.

But I had never seen the Acme Pet Shop.

Since taking over, I had disposed of one tin of turtle food and one dog collar. The dog collar went on credit to a man upstairs who owned a poodle. I had a motley stock of pet supplies and the three puppies I had bought in a moment of enthusiasm from a gentleman whose beagle had involved herself in a mesalliance. I gave four shillings for the lot. Out of this abundance I would somehow have to pay Mr. Flewberg at least part of the rent I owed him.

That afternoon I was watching the puppies eat, wondering how long my stock of dog food would last for the four of us, when this elderly lady with the kind, rather vague face came in. "Is there something I can do for you?" I said.

"I was just looking," she said. Then she added brightly, "I'm Mrs. Doyle from over on Summer Street."

"How do you do?" I said. "It's nice to have a visitor, Mrs. Doyle."

She put her hand in the pen. It was immediately beset by puppies. The one with the white face began to nibble at a finger, as though it were the daintiest of titbits. She laughed so hard she looked ten years younger.

"You know," she said, "I haven't had a dog since I was a little girl."

"Everyone needs a pet," I said. "And you can't beat a dog." I thought she was just browsing—but you never know.

"How much is that white-faced one?" she said.

I took a deep breath. "Mrs. Doyle," I said, "I can see you have an eye for dog flesh. He's the pick of the lot. I'm giving him away at fifteen shillings."

"I'd better be going home," she said. But she didn't move. The white-faced one had started on another finger. "Are they well bred?"

"Their breeding would astonish the kennel club."

She looked at me with the most trusting eyes you ever saw—almost like a dog's. "What kind are they?" she said. "I don't know much about it, you see."

Now I am not the kind of man who makes a practice of deceiving old ladies. But a small white lie which can do no harm often makes people happy. Then there was Mr. Flewberg and that back rent.

I looked at the wall. The two-year-old calendar tacked there showed a fishing scene. "You Get the Big Ones at Bimini!" it said.

"They're Bimini spaniels," I said. I have no excuse, except that this was desperation talking. "A very uncommon breed. Equally at home in the house or the hunting field."

I could almost see the last frail threads of resistance breaking. She sighed, a happy sigh. She counted out the money.

I lined a box with paper and put her puppy inside. But she was still standing by the pen. The puppy with the slightly cocked eye was munching away on her wrist. The third was selecting a fresh tooth hold.

I was in the swing and couldn't stop. "Mrs. Doyle," I said, "it's a shame to separate these superb pups. They're like brothers and sisters. In fact they are brothers and sisters. It's as easy to raise three as one—easier. If you happen to be interested—"

"Oh, I don't think I could," she said. "I just want one for company."

"Mrs. Doyle, I'll regret this," I said. "But I like my dogs to have good homes. Money is a secondary consideration. You can have the three for just thirty shillings. I'll even thrown in a box of Super-Dog Banquet—it builds bone and sinew, due to added vitamins. I was thinking of trying it myself to-night."

"What?" she said.

"Just a joke," I said. "Feeble, wasn't it? I don't know why I made that offer. It's financial suicide. But my word's my word."

She looked lost. "I'm afraid my granddaughter wouldn't——"

"Just the thing for her, madam," I said. "All children need and love dogs."

"She isn't exactly a child."

"It's the same with teenagers. The three will fit nicely in the box. Here's the box of Super-Dog Banquet. Thank you. I'm sorry we have no delivery facilities at the moment, but you can get a taxi across the street."

I put her purchases into the taxi and away she went. Later on, Mr. Flewberg arrived, and I gave him a payment on the back rent. He was so shocked he handed me a cigar. It was a terrible cigar.

This might be the turning point, I thought. To-night I would have a big steak to celebrate. I got so hungry thinking about it that I decided to close up early. I went to the storeroom for my hat. When I came out a girl was standing in front of the dusty showcase that held my collars, leashes, and rubber mice.

She had brought the sunlight inside. She had dark red hair, and eyes that made you think of turquoise, and one of those figures that keep you awake when you should be sleeping. She was about twenty-two.

"You," the girl said.

"Yes, it is," I said.

"You sold my grandmother those mutts. You're a cheap crook."

"So you're the child she spoke of."

"Don't try to evade the subject. Bimini spaniels!" There was a book in her hand. A dog book. "I just happened to have this, you low criminal," she said. "It doesn't say a word about Bimini spaniels. Cocker spaniels, springer spaniels, toy spaniels——"

"Young woman," I said, "I can see that's an old book—one that's altogether out of touch with affairs in the dog world. Don't you know they're always developing new breeds? Sources close to headquarters tell me that the kennel clubs have just recognised the Bimini spaniel."

Glancing at the old calendar I seemed to gather inspiration. "It's a breed with a future, not a past. Those Bimini pups won't bore your grandmother to death talking about their ancestors, the way some of these breed dogs do. And another thing—in a new strain, you don't have to worry about inbreeding. Dogs from these jaded old strains sometimes become hemophiliacs, like members of royal houses."

It didn't seem so bad, for spur-of-the-moment work. But the girl looked at me as though it were the flimsiest fib she'd ever heard.

It was quite clear she wouldn't expect anything better from a chiseller like me.

She held her hand out. "Come and get your mutts," she said. "I don't suppose you can read—but here's the address anyway. You can get someone to help you with the hard words. When you take those frauds away, I'll get my grandmother a decent pup—from somebody who runs a reputable pet shop."

I smiled. I liked the girl's spirit, even though it came at an inconvenient time. Part of that thirty shillings was gone to Mr. Flewberg

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Tony called them Bimini spaniels, Marjorie called them mutts, but Mrs. Doyle just called them dears.

as part payment on back rent. "I'm sorry," I said. "The customer is always right. Every sale carries a guarantee. But there's the law."

She laughed; in a less lovely girl the laugh might almost have been a snort. "Law?" she said. "What would you know about the law, you felon?"

"Dogs can't be returned. You see, I don't know what happened to them after they left here. They might have been exposed to distemper. They might have been taken into a home infested with lice."

As soon as the words were out I realised they were not tactful; not, somehow, the pretty piece of courtliness I intended. She realised it, too. "So now you're alleging that I have distemper and lice," she said.

"Nothing of the kind," I said hastily. "But you know how tough the regulations can be."

I felt a quick change of subject was called for. "It's all so sordid," I said. "Why don't we step out and have a glass of beer, or a cup of coffee or something, and see if we can't work things out?"

She had eyes that became bigger and even more beautiful as they grew angrier. "You!" she said. She had a lovely mouth. "You confidence man!" She swung on her heel. "You rob my poor grandmother, you load her up with those mutts, and then you try to—I'll be back. And when I come back, look out!"

She slammed the door after her. She was gone, and the world was dark and dreary. I noticed that she'd left the bit of paper with the address on it. I put it carefully away. The least I could do was to call and see if the matter of the Bimini spaniels couldn't be adjusted.

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PART EIGHT OF A TEN-PART SERIAL

A TOWN LIKE ALICE

By NEVIL SHUTE

JEAN PAGET comes to Australia after the war to locate JOE HARMAN, stockman, who was tortured for trying to help her when they were both prisoners of the Japanese in Malaya. At the same time Joe, following a lottery win, has gone to England to look for her.

Jean learns that Joe is in England when she reaches Willstown, the little Queensland township nearest to Midhurst, the station he manages. But in England, NOEL STRACHAN, elderly solicitor in charge of Jean's affairs, will not divulge her whereabouts to Joe, thinking it unprofessional.

Meanwhile Jean decides to await Joe's return to Australia. Spending her first evening in Willstown, she chats to PETE FLETCHER and AL BURNS, learning that this was once a flourishing gold town. Now read on:

WHEN the light faded Pete and Al went out and lit the bore for Jean. They struck half-a-dozen matches and got it to light; a flame shot upwards from it and lit up the whole town, playing and flickering among the water and the steam till finally it was extinguished by a vomit of water.

Jean admired it duly; it was clear that this was the one entertainment that the town provided, and they were doing their best to give her a good time.

"It's wonderful," she said. "I've never seen anything like that in England."

They were modest. "Most towns round here have a bore like that, that you can light," they said.

She was tired with her day of flying; at nine o'clock she excused herself from their company and they all wished her good-night. She drew Al Burns a little to one side before she went.

"Al," she said. "I'd like to see Jim Lennon—he's the man at Midhurst, isn't he? I'd like to see him before I go on Wednesday. Will he be coming in to town?"

"Saturday he might be in," Al said. "But if I hear of anybody going out that way I'll send him word and say that you're in town, and want to see him. If not, and if Jim Lennon doesn't come in on Saturday, I'll run you out there in the truck on Sunday."

"That's awfully kind of you," she said. "I don't want to put you to that trouble."

"It's no trouble," he said. "Make a bit of a change."

She went up to bed. The hotel was lit by electric light made in the backyard by an oil engine and generator set that thumped steadily outside her room till she heard the bar close at ten o'clock; at five past ten the engine stopped and all the lights went out. Willstown slept.

About five o'clock the next morning, Jean was aroused with the sounds of people getting up and washing; she lay dozing, listening to the early morning sounds. Breakfast was not till half-past seven; she got up and had a shower and was punctual in the dining-room.

She found that the standard breakfast in Willstown was half a pound of steak with two fried eggs on top of it; she surprised Annie very much by asking for one fried egg and no steak.

"Breakfast is steak and eggs," Annie explained patiently to this queer Englishwoman.

"I know it is," said Jean. "But I don't want the steak."

"Well, you don't have to eat it." The girl was obviously puzzled.

"Could I have just one fried egg, and no steak?" asked Jean.

"You mean, just one fried egg on a plate by itself?"

"That's right."

Food conservation in Willstown was evidently quite a new idea. "I'll ask Mrs. Connor," said Annie. She came back from the kitchen with a steak with two fried eggs on top.

"We've only got the one breakfast," she explained. Jean gave up the struggle.

She ventured out to the kitchen after breakfast and found Mrs. Connor. "I've got a few things to wash," she said. "Could I use your wash tub, do you think? And—have you got an iron?"

"Annie'll do them for you," Mrs. Connor said. "Just give them to her."

Jean had no intention of trusting her clothes to Annie. "She has a lot of work to do," she said, "and I've got nothing. I'll do them myself if I can borrow the tub."

"Good-oh."

Jean spent the morning washing and ironing on the back verandah just outside the kitchen. In that dry, torrid place clothes hung out on a line were dry in ten minutes.

In the kitchen the temperature must have been close on a hundred and twenty fahrenheit. Jean made quick rushes in there to fetch her irons from the stove, and wondered at the fortitude of women who cooked three hot meals a day in such conditions.

Annie came presently and stood around on the back verandah, furtively examining Jean's washing.

Presently she said, "Are you a nurse?"

Jean shook her head. "I'm a typist."

"Oh, I thought you might be a nurse. Most women that come to Willstown are nurses. They don't stay here long. Six months, and then they've had enough."

In the course of the day Jean met most of the notable citizens of Willstown. She walked across to the store to try to buy some cigarettes, but only succeeded in buying a tin of tobacco and a packet of papers.

While she was chatting to Mr. Bill Duncan in the store and examining the piece of quartz with gold in it that he showed her, Miss Kenroy, the schoolteacher, came in. Half an hour later, as Jean was walking back across the road to the hotel, Al Burns met her and wanted to introduce her to Mr. Carter, the shire clerk.

Most of the afternoon she slept, in common with the rest of Willstown. When the day cooled off she came down to the verandah and sat there in a deck-chair, as she had the previous evening.

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ILLUSTRATED BY KEITH DALGLEISH

"You've done the curing very well, Jeff," Jean said, holding up the alligator skin.

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The Fur Coat

By GINA ALLEN

EVEN through the cold grey shadows of evening he could see the green coat at the corner and he knew that within its draughty interior Anita was shivering, waiting for him. Anita in the bright green coat—the jaunty, flippant green coat. "Modern," Anita called it, "air-conditioned."

It was like Anita to wear the coat. In fact, the coat was like Anita—gay and unconcerned. It was one of the things he had first loved about her—that coat. Only after they were married had he discovered how worn it was, how inadequate for a Chicago winter.

He lengthened his steps, hurrying towards her. Every afternoon she did her shopping in time to meet him at the corner on his way from work. And every evening when he saw her, though they had been married a year now, he had the feeling she might vanish before he reached her. He had to check himself to keep from running.

She saw him coming and ran towards him, her arms full of bundles.

"Keith!" she called, and, reaching him, dropped her parcels into his arms. She was breathless from running, her elfin face flushed with the cold, her green eyes bright, her golden hair blowing around. Sometimes the smallness of Anita, her shining brightness made Keith feel like a giant, too large with six-foot height and too sombre with his black hair and eyes.

She lifted herself on tiptoe and gave him a warm kiss, but the tip of her nose brushing his cheek was an icy reminder of the weather. Apparently no one had ever told Anita that you didn't kiss on street corners, and at the moment Keith was glad.

"Mr. Kramer, I think it's time to move to Arizona," Anita declared, squeezing her hand between his arm and the parcels. "We've put up with this sort of thing long enough. When it snows in Chicago I propose to be in Arizona lying in the sun and eating an orange from my citrus grove."

"You need a new coat," Keith said practically.

She looked up at him and wrinkled her nose. "Not in Arizona," she objected.

It was another dream of hers, a fantasy like a child's. There was the one about shipping off on a freighter to an uninhabited island where they could reign as king and queen. And the magnificent suite of offices, with Keith Kramer, Consulting Engineer, in gold leaf over the door. What had happened to that dream and to the white Alaskan fox coat with its red-lined hood?

"I hope Oscar has been a good stove," Anita said fervently as they reached the street doorway. "I hope he didn't go out!"

They climbed three flights of stairs to their small apartment. Seeing it for the first time, Keith had cried, "Ridiculous!" But Anita had cried, "Wonderful!" and set to work on it almost at once. Now, of course, it was wonderful, and Anita was as pleased as a little girl with a new toy.

To-night Anita removed the old green coat which should have been white fur, and warmed her hands within the circle of heat from

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN MILLS

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Keith thought he was dreaming. But then the vision spoke, "You think I'm a goddess in disguise, don't you?"

Oscar's fat black body. Keith took the packages to the kitchen and Anita's voice followed him.

"How did it do?" she asked. "The pilot plant, I mean. Did it work? I've been worrying all day."

He came back to stand beside her in the glow of Oscar's fire. "It worked!" he said. "Mr. Ferry is Laxton Associates' happiest client. Uncle George is as proud as a new father."

"But you're the father!" Anita protested. "You built the pilot plant. Uncle George couldn't have done it in a dozen years."

Keith kissed her. "Uncle George is a specialist," he said, "a good chemist and an excellent businessman. What am I, after all?"

"A genius," Anita answered promptly.

Keith burst into laughter. "Ah, Genius!" he mocked, "employed by thy uncle! Where is thy spark?"

He was laughing, but Anita's eyes were sober. "That's what I keep wondering," she mused. "Why do you stay with Laxton Associates? Is it loyalty to Uncle George?"

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There was a sparkle about Anita that matched the shining splendor of the coat.

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"Put radiant Highlights in your hair"

says lovely Sydney model PAT FIRMAN

Miss Pat Firman, beautiful fashion model, finds Napro "Hi-Liter" brings out her hair's natural shimmering highlights and silken sheen.

Bring out your hair's hidden highlights with Napro "Hi-Liter" Colour Shampoo

Like Pat Firman, you, too, can have hair that glows with radiant highlights . . . with just *one* application of Napro "Hi-Liter." Not a dye or bleach, "Hi-Liter" is the amazing colour shampoo that is so wonderfully quick and as simple as an ordinary shampoo.

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Those lovely highlights last and last . . . you need use "Hi-Liter" only once a month. Titian—for coppery-red highlights . . . gold—for golden gleam.

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by the makers of Napro Hair Vitalizer, Hair Dyes, Blonding Emulsion and other exclusively blended hair preparations.

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You'd be wise to follow his lead. He knows the importance of healthy, well-groomed hair, and he uses Napro Hair Vitalizer for Men. Napro Hair Vitalizer is a scientific preparation to keep the scalp and hair healthy . . . to remove dandruff . . . and to keep hair well groomed without greasiness. Get a tube to-day!

N.28.8

You Belong To Me

Continued from page 3

AND there had been no way round that. A week ago, and there were all the years to face. The piled, iceberg years.

Rose turned from the window, and plugged in a vacuum cleaner. Work of some kind was a necessary drug.

Hearing the heavy purr from her room across the landing, her mother, Daphne Suffolk, lifted a powder puff from the crystal bowl on her dressing-table and sighed as she applied it. At forty-six her face was still smooth and pink and pretty; and she strenuously blinked away easy tears when she thought of Rose, her eldest daughter, so pale, so bottled up, cleaning the p.g.'s room. On such a lovely day, too.

What had gone wrong? Of course Rose would never tell any of them. That stiff, difficult Howard. Of course it would have been pleasant to have a barrister in the family. A touch of solidarity was a great help sometimes, and he might have lightened a bit through association with the Suffolks. If only Rose would realise she would never have had any fun out of life with him she'd soon get over it.

The dancing light scattered coins of silver across the dusty mirror.

I must dust it! thought Daphne, remembering how in one servantless period her husband had written in the dust of her mirror. "I love you."

She looked vaguely for a duster.

I should have been married to a rich man! Life is too sordid. And yet, poor Barney. I adored him most of the time. There seems no real fun without him. Why should Rose clean that room? I know we need the money, but cleaning the p.g.'s room so thoroughly is quite unnecessary. I wonder if Rose knows what we are having for lunch? I hate the week-end with everybody at home. You feel much poorer at the week-end than you do during the week.

She bent again to the mirror and smoothed her hair.

"I may live another forty years!" she murmured.

It was both a horrible and a highly satisfactory thought.

The shivery snowflake music from the first act of Swan Lake crept in with the wind.

"Margot, my sweet child!" cried her mother, running out through the french window on to the little wrought-iron balcony and throwing her voice up. "Don't work any more! You make the house shake! Let me have that skirt and I'll take it to the cleaner."

A pause. The gramophone stopped, and a thin bare arm showed for a second at the top window, and a pink ballet skirt, crumpled like a gigantic Iceland poppy, floated down and draped itself on the balcony railings.

Mrs. Suffolk stamped her foot, and one of her narrow heels stuck in the wrought-iron.

"Margot! Margot!" she cried, while she struggled to free it.

This time Margot herself appeared and her mother smiled up at her, happy to think she had made this pretty thing. Wild rose cheeks, dark falls of hair on either side of a pointed face, and tilted feathery brows.

"Don't fling things out of windows!" said her mother, as sternly as she ever said anything.

"And don't say I make the house shake!" Margot beat her rounded fists upon the window-sill. Her red mouth trembled.

"But you did, darling! It was a mistake to give you the top room."

"I don't make the house shake!"

"Shush!" said her mother hurriedly.

"I don't!"

"All right, you don't, my treasure."

"Mummy!" Great tears sprang out of Margot's eyes. "Am I getting too heavy! Am I? Am I?"

"Heavy? Darling! Don't be so silly. You're like a little puff of wind!"

"You said . . ."

"Figurative," said her mother, "and don't cry out of the window like that. You might splash somebody. And you'll disturb Piers."

In the next room several books were thrown to the floor, and Piers staged a cynical laugh.

"There!" said her mother. "Now you've interrupted his train of thought. Perhaps it's those entrechats, darling—they are a trifle—"

"I vowed I'd do a hundred plies, fifty arabesques, and fifty grands battlements, and say 'I hate him' after every one," said Margot.

"Hate who?"

"It was in the enchainement yesterday!" said Margot's voice. "He drove me till I was nearly fainting. And that little cane, tap, tap, tap! I hate him!"

"And I bet he hates you, you stuck up baby elephant!"

Piers' head came out of his window and was tilted up to grimace at his sister.

"If you call me an elephant again——"

Margot's face grew dark. Piers, mocking, looked at his mother.

"You look very sprightly, Mamma. Now if you were doing pas-de-chat over my head I wouldn't mind. But this ballet-dancing heavyweight!"

"Now, Piers, you're being malicious," said his mother. "One thing you never mention to a ballet dancer is weight!"

"No? And who started it?"

"Anybody coming with me to buy a new hat?" she added hastily.

"Was it father who taught you that all earthly troubles could be cured by buying a new hat? I don't think it was at all realistic of him."

> ***"There are people who can do all fine and heroic things but one — keep from telling their happiness to the unhappy."***
>
> **—Mark Twain**

"I wish you wouldn't talk of your father like that," objected his mother, "as if you never knew him, and he looked exactly like you. He was an angel!"

"Thanks."

"And you look like a devil!" Margot threw down from above. "Lolling about writing a play."

"I'll wring your skinny little neck . . ."

Her mother raised her voice, clasping the pink ballet skirt to her chest.

"I think you're both childish. Now Rose is really miserable, and she doesn't yell and scream out of windows."

"That snake Howard," hissed Margot. "I could kill him! I'd like to see his nice respectable blood flowing in the street!"

"A barrister called Howard is bound to be of poor value," said Piers. "Why, he had the cheek to say I ought to stick to the Civil Service."

"So you ought," said Margot.

"Shut up! Anyway, knowing she's well rid of him doesn't make it any better for Rose at the moment, and I'd be quite willing to put up with him if it made her happy. Meanwhile, there are distractions. I'll take her on the river this afternoon, and read her my new third act."

"If you think that's going to heal her broken heart . . ." shouted Margot.

"Hush! Hush! Hush!" Their mother made a number of ineffectual pretty sounds, and then caught sight of her hand spread out on the pink ballet skirt. She held it up, frowning. "This nail varnish isn't quite right, you know."

Piers leant farther out.

"You vain woman. What does it matter if your nail varnish isn't right! Who cares?"

She looked stricken.

"Piers!"

"Darling, I'm merely teasing you because you look so pretty. You ought to marry again!"

"Impossible!" she said, looking pleased, and then raising her voice. "Margot, darling, coming? It's a lovely day. You ought to be out."

"No! No! No! I'm working."

A subtle trembling of the ceiling, and the witty music of "Facade" was now mixed with the intoxicating flourish of the wind.

"This is too much!"

She ran across her own room as Piers pounded through his.

"Don't hurt Margot!" she called at Piers' legs as they disappeared up the next flight of stairs.

She listened for a moment. They were merely shouting at each other. It wasn't a really bad quarrel.

Across the landing the sound of the vacuum-cleaner had stopped. Poor Rose. Poor sweet. But she'd have exploded after a bit, living with that man. Not that she could see that for the moment. Meanwhile they must all try to cheer her up. The Suffolks did stick together whatever other faults they had. That was why they had never had any fear, even when Rose was engaged, that with her marriage she would cease to help them.

She crossed the landing and opened the p.g.'s door.

". . . 'to save him above all things, though it would be so much better for him to die! So much greater! But I know you will take your own way as he took it. I have no powers. I'm only a woman; I can do nothing but sit here and suffer' . . ."

"Rose!"

She ran forward. This was terrible . . . much worse than she thought.

"Rose, my poor darling! Oh, it was you, Juliet!"

The two girls in the room looked at her without much astonishment. As if they were used to this kind of thing. Rose, slim and tall, her pretty brown hair curling gently upwards about her small head, leant on the handle of the vacuum-cleaner, holding a book. Juliet, in grey slacks and jersey, made a gesture of resignation.

"Mummy, if you'd only listen. Rose is hearing my lines in 'The Devil's Disciple' . . ."

"It's because it's Juliet's last term, mother. All sorts of important people will be at the end-of-term show. If Juliet does well . . ." said Rose.

"Oh, I've got to! I've got to! I shall die if I have to go round in repertory for the rest of my life," wailed Juliet.

"Nothing is for the rest of your life at your age," said their mother. "How lovely this room looks, Rose! I do hope the wretch is thankful."

"Why should he be?" cried Juliet stormily. "Nobody ever is grateful! That's what I hate about life! The people, the nauseating, priggish, prying people. If it wasn't for people how perfect the world would be. Look at it, look at it outside, all laid out for beauty—even here!"

Her mother sighed, full of admiration.

"Darling, that's perfect! How well you do it!"

Juliet sagged into an armchair, laughing shakily. "That was me—original Juliet Suffolk."

"Shall we go on with the play?" asked Rose. "Do the lead-up to that last bit again."

Please turn to page 20

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Army gets ready again

★ *Scenes familiar to Australians between 1939 and 1945 are being re-enacted as volunteers for Korea and Regular Army recruits undergo training.*

These photographs are of young permanent army recruits doing special training at Ingleburn and Holdsworthy camps, N.S.W. Korea volunteers, all veterans of World War II, are taking a refresher course.

VIVID FLASH as a land-mine explodes in the path of an oncoming jeep. The jeep was driven across a Bailey-type bridge which engineers at Holdsworthy camp, near Ingleburn, have built across a stream. The Bailey bridge proved its worth to troops on many fronts in World War II.

CORPORAL SEWELL, of Ipswich, Queensland (right), gives Private Barker, of Bundeena, N.S.W., instruction in the handling of a Bren light machine-gun. Both are in training at Ingleburn camp, N.S.W.

CARRIER taking a 3-inch mortar into action during intensive training at Ingleburn. Crew members are, left to right: Privates Graham, of Bankstown, Brindle, of Glebe, Haddock, of Padstow, and Mobbs, of Gosford, and Sergeant Timms, of Carramar, all N.S.W. men. They agree course is "tough."

THREE RECRUITS tackle a 16-foot rope ladder, part of the commando-like assault course. They are Private Burton, of Fairfield, N.S.W. (on top), and Privates McKeen, of Brisbane, Qld. (left), and Byrne, of Maroubra, N.S.W.

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BEAUTIFUL christening robes for Sara Quadruplets delight parents Percy and Betty Sara. Each one has different design. Betty thinks they will be "wonderful for generations of Saras to come."

Saras re-design house for the Quads

While three are a crowd, four almost constitute a mob in the two-bedroom house in which Mrs. Betty Sara plans to rear her quadruplets at Bellingen, N.S.W.

Before the arrival of the Quads the house had ample room for Percy and Betty Sara and son Geoffrey.

By GEORGINA O'SULLIVAN, staff reporter

EVERY spare foot of extra space is being used to accommodate them and Sister Rita Glyde, who will help Betty Sara care for the new babies.

Curly-haired, 24-year-old Sister Glyde was visiting her parents at Bellingen after finishing her obstetric training at Brisbane Hospital, when the Quads were being born.

She answered an emergency appeal to help at the confinement.

Rita has become so attached to the babies that she does not mind the cramped living space in the Sara home.

Her parents live on a 165-acre dairy farm three miles out of Bellingen. Rita expects to get home only at odd intervals, because she wants to see the Quads well on the road to good health before she leaves early next year to get married in Queensland.

She and Betty Sara were "just acquaintances" before the Quads were born, but they are now close friends. Rita says she and Betty will be "flat out coping with Alison's liking for her tucker." She thinks Judith is like her mother, Phillip like his father and Mark and Alison like each other.

The 12ft. x 12ft. second bedroom at the Sara house has been converted into a nursery, and portion of the kitchen has been curtained off into a room for Sister Glyde.

Four-year-old Geoffrey, when he returns from a visit to his grandparents in Sydney, will sleep in a little room which has been partitioned off in the glassed-in back verandah.

The Quads' nursery, panelled in dark wood, has two pink and two blue bassinets, a delphinium-blue plastic bath on a stand, and two cream chests of drawers.

A kerosene refrigerator, formerly in the kitchen, will be used only for the Quads' food.

The nursery also has a heater and an ultra-violet lamp to kill germs.

Percy Sara has chopped down flowering shrubs which were growing in the narrow passageway outside the nursery window to allow more light and air into the room.

Although she will have domestic help and Sister Glyde's assistance, Betty has resigned herself to a long "working day" because she wants to give all her attention to the babies.

During the last three weeks in Bellinger River Hospital she has spent most of her time in the nursery. At home she plans to follow the hospital routine as strictly as possible.

Percy Sara, who is kept busy with

AMBULANCE OFFICER Archie Thompson helps Percy measure partition for section of back verandah which will be four-year-old Geoffrey's room.

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FEEDING TIME. Percy gives Judith her bottle, Mark has had the small complement given to his natural feeding, and Sister Daisy McFadyen holds hungry Alison and Phillip.

EVERY DAY is washing day now that there are four new babies in the Sara house. Percy, a handy man round the house, does his bit over the washtubs.

SISTER RITA GLYDE, special nurse for the Quads. Trained at Bellingen Hospital, she did her obstetrics in Brisbane and has always wanted to be a children's nurse.

PERCY SARA spent busy days preparing house and nursery for home-coming of Betty and her four babies. Only necessary furniture and fittings are in nursery, which has two small windows.

his ambulance work, thinks "things will be a bit awkward until we get going with our routine."

"I'll have to help with the napkins and anything else Betty and Sister Glyde want me to do," he said.

"I helped a bit when Geoff was a baby and I've been getting my hand in again by helping to give Phillip and Judith their bottles at the hospital."

Betty is out of bed at 5.45 each morning to start the 6 o'clock feeding and is not ready for breakfast until after 7. The babies are fed again at nine, noon, three, six, and 10 p.m. The two little ones are given bottles at 2 a.m., but Mrs. Sara does not get up for this.

"I feel well in the morning but am pretty tired by the end of the day," she said.

"I know the babies very well now and every day each one seems to have a new little trick. As Alison and Mark fill out they look more like Phillip and Judith."

Percy's ambulance colleagues, Archie Thompson and Roy Druhan, gave up their spare time to help him spring clean the house and make the necessary alterations for Betty's return home.

Archie fumigated the nursery with a mixture used to fumigate ambulances.

Both Percy and Betty Sara are healthy and are certain that they could not have a better district than Bellingen in which to rear their children.

"I've seen half-a-pint of cream on top of a two-pint billycan of milk here," Percy said.

"The meat is beautiful and except in times of flood there are plenty of vegetables."

The Saras have finished paying for all the furniture in their home. Recently they spent their spare money on an electric stove and a wireless.

There is no sewerage at the house. The tap supplying town water, which is very hard, is in the backyard. Taps in the laundry and bathroom and one in the kitchen, 18 inches from the floor, near the fuel stove, supply tank water. There is no tap over the kitchen sink.

The Quads are a "bit light on napkins and dresses," but people from all over Australia have sent them presents.

Among the gifts are 87 pairs of booties, 45 bonnets, 11 pairs of mittens, 46 jackets, 32 singlets, 21 bibs, 11 nighties, 11 petticoats, 12 baby books, four pairs of satin boots, eight bunny rugs, and five New Testaments each inscribed with a name. One is for Geoffrey.

The Quads will wear model gowns from Paris for their public reception into the Church of England.

The Rev. L. R. Crossman gave them emergency baptism in hospital when it was not certain that they would live.

Beautiful robes

The Church of England allows anyone to baptise in an emergency.

"When a private service is held because of an emergency, it is fitting that a public service should be held at a later date, when immediate danger of death is passed," Dean Babbage, of Sydney, explained.

"Baptism itself is not repeated, but there is a public reception into the Church in the presence of the congregation."

The robes the babies will wear at the ceremony were chosen by Mr. Norman Myer in Paris and flown out. They are the first consignment of baby clothes from the Myer Emporium, which has offered to clothe the Quads for the first six years.

The robes are made of hand-stitched French organdie muslin, embroidered with flowers, leaves, and french knots.

They billow out from yokes marked with dozens of small pin-tucks.

Four matching cream satin underslips were made in the Melbourne Myer workrooms.

The robes and slips were sent to Bellingen in four celluloid boxes specially made to prevent crushing.

Mrs. Sara has been asked to send the Myer Emporium a list of styles as well as types of other garments needed for the babies.

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Brave young G.I.'s have no let-up in Korea

Jolting, primitive trains transport wounded from battle zones

From DOROTHY DRAIN, in Japan

I went to Korea to see the kind of war that would confront Australian troops, and in which Australian airmen were playing such a notable part.

Six days later when I returned to Japan I noticed that Americans in Korea spoke of Japan almost as nostalgically as they spoke of the United States.

THERE may be filthier and more evil-smelling places than Korea on the face of the earth, but I doubt it.

There are a lot of things I shall always remember about my first sight of war at close quarters: The sound of artillery at the end of an advanced airstrip where I landed one day; the convoys rattling along narrow, rough roads among the primitive people crowded in thatched hovels in the villages; the traffic hold-ups at river bridges without railings; the call in a train, "Hey, which of you fellers left a grenade on this seat?"

But the most vivid of all is not any of those. It is the silhouette of a pair of worn bootsoles. They were on a wounded American soldier, who lay quiet on a stretcher placed across the tops of wooden seats on a train that carried wounded to an evacuation hospital.

I sat opposite those bootsoles on that dirty, unlit train on the night journey that took 8½ hours to cover 120 miles.

Sometimes a flashlight or the light of a wayside station illuminated the boots. Sometimes they moved as their wearer shifted restlessly. But mostly they stayed quite still.

I had gone from Pusan to Taegu, near the north-west of the small piece of Korea then held by U.N. forces. Although enemy troops at their nearest point were six miles away and at night you could hear gunfire and see flashes in the sky, it was described at that time as a quiet sector of the front.

One lunchtime the two Australian observers on the United Nations Commission in Korea, Squadron-Leader Ron Rankin and Major Stuart Peach, who were working from Taegu after their third move since the North Koreans overran Seoul, said, "There's a train going at three. You had better go while you can."

Apart from a Danish woman correspondent travelling with her correspondent husband, who left the same day, I was probably the only other white woman in Taegu at that time.

North Korean forces had cut the road between Taegu and Pohang. Taegu, which had been partly evacuated three weeks before, was again threatened.

The train that I boarded was described as a hospital train, with a passenger carriage at the back. But hospital was a euphemistic term for this dirty train composed of cars with bare wooden seats facing each other and running along both sides of an aisle.

When a Red Cross man saw me sprinkle some DDT around the seat I sat in he mentioned that he had had the train sprayed out earlier.

All the afternoon stretcher cases were loaded from ambulances into the carriages and placed on the tops of seats. By the time the train left Taegu, at 6 p.m., it carried also several men war correspondents and four North Korean prisoners of war under guard.

An hour or so along the line, as the rain-sodden countryside was blanketed by the dark, more wounded came aboard. Finally, in the compartment where I sat, correspondents sat at one end, prisoners at the other, and wounded on stretchers in the middle.

The owner of the boots had been one of those moved into our compartment by the light of electric torches. Like most of them he lay still and silent. Occasionally you could hear a call along the train for a "medic."

Across the aisle was an 18-year-old boy who was restless and talked. "Where are they taking us?" he asked. He had been wounded that morning on his 27th patrol in 15 days. He had a shrapnel wound in the leg. "I'm all right, though it pains a bit," he said.

There were four doctors on the train and some wardsmen, but it was a long train packed with wounded, and like everyone else in Korea the doctors and wardsmen had been working incessantly for weeks. A couple of military police moved up and down the train offering what help they could, but amenities were non-existent.

An M.P. came to our end of the carriages to ask if anyone had a clean rag to wet the lips of a man with an abdominal wound. The man couldn't be given water to drink.

Miraculously I had a clean handkerchief, and later someone produced an old mackintosh to serve as a pillow for another patient. Correspondents lent their flashlights around to eke out the few available.

It must have been a ghastly journey for those in pain—the black darkness, the jolting stops, the long waits at stations. At one station the man with the abdominal wound was taken off the train to a surgical unit.

In one carriage walking wounded sat on hard wooden seats.

The night dragged along, and at 2.30 a.m., when we drew into the dimly lit station of Pusan, ambulances were waiting to take the men to an evacuation hospital, from which they would soon be flown to hospitals in Japan.

Too dusty for singing

But that train emphasised the tremendous difficulty the Americans have had in waging war in this primitive country.

The South Korean soldiers train enthusiastically for war. Everywhere in the towns you pass marching columns of Korean soldiers. They train with verve and they sing war songs—but they haven't proved very effective as fighters.

The Americans don't sing. They know better after three months of hard fighting. To sing would only invite a mouthful of dust.

Nor is it only the combat soldiers who are weary. Whatever the job, it has been night and day work with little sleep.

Every day is a working day and leave is a luxury that belongs to the past. Not that leave in Korea would mean much except the opportunity for sleep.

They joke, of course, as soldiers always do. Out of the stenches by Christmas is one of the gag lines, and the southern Americans ask the northern boys, "What you doing fighting for the south, buddy?" But there's not much to joke about.

They don't lack courage. They are splendid types of young men.

Behind them, when I saw them, the weight of American organisation had gathered momentum. A new airfield, for instance, was built in 15 days. Supplies and men were moving in quickly. The official attitude was optimistic, and the arrival of British troops had heartened the overburdened Americans.

They were looking forward to the arrival of Australian troops. When we get more men we will be all right, said many Americans I spoke to.

The day I left Korea to return to Japan stretcher cases were being loaded on to a transport plane. On the transport I flew in there were two other passengers, a soldier and an airman, and nine walking wounded. There was a boy with his arm in a sling, who laughed and joked. Beside him sat a 19-year-old lad who stared straight ahead. His expression never changed.

At the air base where we landed in Japan there were Red Cross girls and pretty U.S. special services girls greeting the wounded when the ambulances drew in alongside the planes.

The flight had taken less than an hour. It was another airstrip full of warplanes. But it was another world.

WOUNDED AMERICAN soldier being carried by United States Army Medical Corps men from an ambulance to a hospital a short distance behind the battlefront in Korea.

SURVIVOR of massacre of about 40 American prisoners by North Koreans identifies men who, he says, murdered his mates.

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HINTS FOR PLAN-A-HOME CONTEST

Specimen design shows how to draw your entry

This week we give a sample plan to help you prepare your entry for The Australian Women's Weekly £4000 Plan-A-Home Contest.

The plan shows you how to draw up your entry, and at the same time illustrates pitfalls to avoid in designing your house.

The contest, announced last week, is for the ground plan of a three-bedroom home in the suburbs or the country.

THE site on which the house is to be built is presumed to be level. It has a frontage of 50 feet to a road, and it faces the south. The most pleasant views are to the north.

The plan must be accompanied by a description of the color scheme and furnishings.

Some readers have asked precisely what we mean by a ground plan.

The specimen published on this page will answer this question.

The site presents some problems; the street is to the south, the best views to the north.

Yet the specimen plan has followed conventional lines, and the only verandah has no view and will get little sun in the winter.

Some glaring faults appear in the ground plan. The lounge-room and bathroom doors are opposite. The laundry opens into the kitchen.

Access from kitchen to dining-room is not easy. Kitchen is cramped, and space is wasted in the hall and lobby.

Look closely and apply the problems of practical living to this plan and you will see even more faults.

Such errors of judgment are by no means uncommon. They are perpetuated in costly bricks and mortar in many big and small homes. Once built in, they are there to stay.

Many a "sun-room" facing south needs some form of heating for nine months in the year.

Bad arrangement of rooms and long treks from kitchen to living quarters give hundreds of housewives fallen arches, and weight-lifting feats with clothes baskets up and down steps to the laundry shorten both tempers and lives.

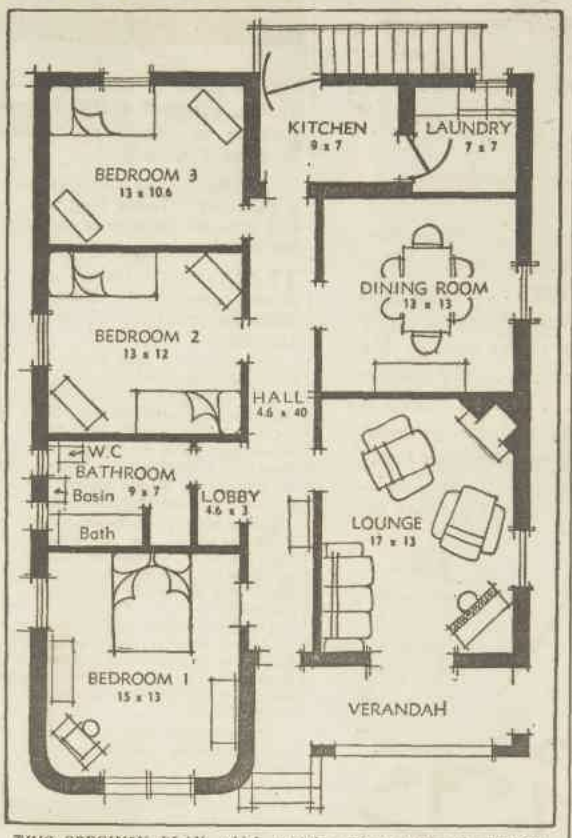
Start work on your entry now, and make sure you don't fall into the errors in the plan on this page.

So that readers will be quite familiar with the rules, they are published again here. Cut them out and keep them for reference.

The house may be up to 14 squares in size, excluding terraces and verandahs. A square is 10 feet by 10 feet, or 100 square feet.

Area is obtained by multiplying the length of a room by the breadth. Add up the areas of the rooms and of the passages.

Your calculations are not required to be absolutely accurate. A miscalculation of a few square feet will not disqualify your plan.



THIS SPECIMEN PLAN, which contains many errors of planning, illustrates how to draw your entry for the plan-a-home competition, but the plan you submit does not have to be so expertly drawn. You need not indicate position of furniture.

Your designs can help other homemakers

These days there is usually only one pair of hands to run a house, and even in modern houses with every convenience this is not an easy job.

THE people who know all about houses and the running of them are the women homemakers.

One of the objects of this competition is to encourage an exchange of practical ideas.

One person's design for comfortable living can be of great value to others.

That is why the condition has been made that skill in drawing does not count.

As long as your plan is clear and your written explanation gives your reasons for the arrangement of the rooms and how you would decorate and furnish the house, there is nothing else to worry about.

You do not have to say how you would arrange the furniture. All that is necessary is to describe the type of furniture you would choose and the colors and style of curtains, carpets, and wall decorations.

Young people will have their own special ideas. Many of them know from experience the shortcomings of certain types of family homes.

Having grown up in an age of labor-saving devices and streamlined utilities, their plans may differ substantially from those of an older generation.

All will have good points to be considered by the panel of experts.

Wall space not included

● *Because a number of readers have been worried about the amount of space to allow for outside and inside walls, it has been decided that walls need not be included in the total area.*

Thickness of the wall would vary with materials used.

SIMPLE RULES

Your entry must consist of:

1. A plan of a three-bedroom house situated in the suburbs or in the country.

2. A brief explanation of the plan and a description of color scheme and furnishings.

PLAN:

A ground plan with the sizes of the rooms indicated and positions of doors and windows marked. If you propose to build in some of the furniture, show where this would be done.

The house may be up to 14 squares (1400 sq. ft.) in size, excluding verandahs or terraces.

Site for the home is a block of land 50ft. in frontage. Frontage to road faces south. Most pleasant views are to north.

EXPLANATION:

Say in your own words why you arranged the rooms as you did and add a description of the way you would furnish it, giving colors and the type of furniture.

Conditions:

No person who earns a living, or has ever earned a living, as an architect, architectural designer, draughtsman, builder, or interior decorator may enter this competition.

Finalists will be required to sign a declaration that their plan is their own unaided work and that they have not had advice or help from any architect, architectural designer, draughtsman, builder, or interior decorator.

No member of the staff or relative of a member of the staff of Consolidated Press Ltd. may enter this contest.

Prizes will be awarded in accordance with the judges' views of the relative merits of the entries received. The decision of the judges will be final and each competitor will enter the competition on that basis.

Copyright on all entries shall belong to Consolidated Press Ltd.

Address your entries to the Editor, The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4098WW, G.P.O., Sydney. The envelope should be marked—Plan-A-Home Contest.

FULL LIST OF PRIZES

Following is the full prize-list in our Plan-A-Home Contest:

First Prize £2000
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BOOK REVIEW

YOU WERE THERE — ANYWOMAN

BY AINSLIE BAKER

In years to come a loving and intimate knowledge of the works of Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon might well be as dating as a passion for Noel Coward or Winston Churchill.

For Brahms and Simon, who in the '30's and '40's, with "Bullet in the Ballet," "Trottie True," etc., brought a wonderful and unique kind of lunatic laughter to sophisticated readers, have written their last book.

IT is "You Were There," and was completed by Caryl Brahms after S. J. Simon's death last year.

She says: "Dear Skid, I have finished the book. But, of course, it will be obvious to all who read it that their host was from home."

Caryl Brahms is too modest. "You Were There" is as good as anything they have ever written. There is all the sparkle, all the gaiety, and the same brilliant characterisation.

But it will be interesting to see if in the future she attempts to carry on alone, or confines herself to her writings on British ballet, on which she is already a foremost authority.

The novel, which they warn the reader on the first page "is less a novel than an out-of-date newsreel," deals with the years between the funeral of Queen Victoria and the death of George V.

The cavalcade they make of a period beginning with black gloves, smelling-salts, and hansom cabs and ending with nail polish, gin-and-twos, and trans-atlantic liners is frequently funny, often surprisingly moving.

One of the spicy characters in this richly spiced book is General Marrible, of Mafeking.

On his death-bed the General, who bears the appellation "Old Boy," calls together his four illegitimate children, and tells them that, though strangers (with the exception of the twins, Viola and Sebastian), he wants them in future to regard themselves as a family.

As well as the twins (their mother was a governess in a country house in which the Old Boy briefly stayed) there are Alfie, son of a French fille de joie, and Arthur, whose mother was the daughter of the Marrible village postmistress.

This ill-assorted quartet, their efforts to establish a family front, and their progress in the careers of ballet (Viola), law (Arthur), the stage (Sebastian), and several shady enterprises (Alfie), supply the story.

Fans will be enchanted by the reappearance of Trottie True, first as the Duchess and later the Dowager Duchess of Wellwater.

Soliciting the assistance of his mother in his courtship of Viola, Digby, seventh Earl of Wellwater, is moved to say, "Mother, you may be a bit of a pill as a Duchess, but as a mother you're a trooper."

The book ends:

"The paloaka man had a shock of black hair like a Japanese doll without a fringe, a moon-shaped, moon-colored face that looked like a moon that needed shaving, and ash all over him. His name was S. J. Simon.

"The girl paloaka looked like a Semitic sparrow. She was Caryl Brahms . . . they didn't know what the future was to hold for them . . . but you could bet . . . there'd be a lot of laughter in it."

And for readers there's been a lot of wonderful laughter in the years of their collaboration.

THE somewhat improbably named Rose Cologne, heroine of Fannie Hurst's "Anywoman," is like the little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead.

When she is good she is very very good. And when she is bad she is horrid.

When she is good (she's 20), she says this sort of thing:

"But I like to be at home and read and sew and, well, just sit and feel the valley all around me."

Rose when she's bad (it's her second conversation with the slick swimming instructor, Caesar):

"I hope you thought of me last night. You did say you weren't married, didn't you? Caesar's an exciting name. As exciting as you are."

FANNIE HURST

You wouldn't think a nice homely girl, secretly engaged to the doctor son of her town's wealthiest family, would so shamelessly throw herself at the first handsome stranger she meets — even though her fiance is a little stodgy.

Nor would I. Miss Hurst, however, does. And proceeds to tell in some detail how Rose off-loads the earnest doctor on to her flighty young cousin, and, throwing maidenly reserve to the wind, follows Caesar to New York.

How that girl hounds him, and without, it must be admitted, anything very noticeable in the way of encouragement. She tracks him down by telephone, on foot, and by government mail. Seldom has there been so relentless a pursuit of male by female.

When she has irrevocably tossed her small-town bonnet over the mill, Caesar is hopelessly maimed in an accident. It seems only reasonable to suppose that Rose lived to regret her brashness for the rest of her days.

It is strange that Miss Hurst, who might so well have been the matrons' favorite purveyor of the fresh and fragrant, feels herself compelled so often to write of the seamier side.

Her publishers list 11 other novels written by Miss Hurst, who is now 61, an age at which she might reasonably be supposed to know better.

It would have been more suitable if instead of Rose Cologne Miss Hurst had called her central character Poppy Chanel.

"You Were There" is published by Michael Joseph, London. Our copy from Angus and Robertson.

"Anywoman" is published by Jonathan Cape, London. Our copy from Craftsman Bookshop.

Editorial

SEPTEMBER 30, 1950

ROADS AND DEFENCE

IN a record budget of nearly £700,000,000, the Federal Treasurer, Mr. Fadden, is providing for greatly increased defence expenditure.

Australia must be strong enough to command respect, though the fervent hope of her people is that that strength may never be used in another war.

A necessary part of any defence plan in this country of long distances is an efficient road system. Each State must have a network over which men and equipment may be moved speedily.

In World War II, roads had to be built with great speed regardless of expense. The North-South Road, from Alice Springs to Darwin, is a case in point.

Floods and rain in the Eastern States and in South Australia have caused exceptionally heavy damage. One small section of a main highway between Melbourne and Sydney will cost £50,000 to repair.

Surely, at least, the entire revenue derived from petrol tax should be used for road construction and maintenance as a defence measure if nothing more.

But the Commonwealth Government in allocating only £12,000,000 among the States for this purpose is withholding a substantial cut.

Money used for roads will simultaneously assist the expansion of agricultural and secondary industries, as necessary in peace as in war.

Good highways and secondary roads also ensure a reduction in the accident toll on life and limb. Too many lives are being lost on the roads to-day.

With more revenue at their disposal the Main Roads Boards and local councils might at least be able to provide footpaths for pedestrians in the country and outer suburbs.

Then the spectacle would be less common of perambulators jogging on the roadside, or being wheeled at great risk on the road itself, while vehicular traffic rolls by on concrete.

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LEAVING St. Michael's Church, Vaucluse, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Franki are shielded by umbrella. Bride, formerly Gilla Lamrock, only child of Mrs. G. C. Lamrock, of Rose Bay. Bob is only child of Mrs. R. J. N. Franki, of Rose Bay, and of the late Mr. Franki.

SCOTTISH REGIMENT BALL. Marcia Moses (left) and Leonore Gemmell are squired by David Playfair (second from left) and Bill Douglass at New South Wales Scottish Regiment ball at the Trocadero.

DIPLOMATIC PARTY. Mrs. T. C. Baja, wife of First Secretary of Philippines Legation, chats with French Ambassador, M. Gabriel Pavodani, and Dr. H. V. Evatt at cocktal party at Australia Hotel in celebration of centenary of death of Honore de Balzac.

Intimate Gossiping

MARRIED IN COOLAH. Mr. and Mrs. John Poulton leaving Coolah Church of England after their marriage. Bride formerly Roslyn Agnew, only daughter of Mrs. Agnew, of Locknaw, Coolah, and the late Mr. Louis Agnew. Bridegroom is son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Poulton, of Molo, Kenya, British East Africa.

COUNTRY INTEREST. Roger Dean, M.H.R. for Robertson, and his bride, formerly Ann Manning, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Manning, of Inverell, leave St. Augustine's Church, Inverell, after their marriage. Bridegroom is son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dean, of Mayfield, Newcastle.

CONVERSATION out west takes cheerful note for first time in weeks when "the races" replace "the floods" as chief topic. Brisbane, Melbourne, and Western folks pour into our city for Spring Race Meeting and impromptu reunions are the order of the day when they stay at same hotels.

First away from the barrier is Pre-Race Week Ball at Prince's, where prize is awarded for "most weird and wonderful hat." On Race Week eve "Naughty Nineties Night In a Circus" ball will be held at A.C.I. Ballroom. Wins and losses of opening day are aired at Macquarie Club's annual cocktail party. Highlight of social events, the Black and White Ball at the Trocadero, brings out most glamorous gowns. After ball, enthusiasts brace themselves for Ladies' Day next day, and then go on to "At Home" at the Australian Club.

• • •

VISITORS coming to town include Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Sawyer, of "Euloma" Bethungra, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cobcroft, from Armidale, and brother, Gavin, Willow Tree; the E. S. Katers, from "Mumblebone," Warren, the Brian Crowleys from Merrywinebone, and the Bill Moses, from Gumble, Gunnedah. Orion brings Mr. and Mrs. J. D. McLarty and daughters back from Europe just in time for meeting, before returning to Jerilderie.

• • •

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS Pamela Woods, Merriwa, and Tink Haydon, Warrah Ridge, Quirindi, tell Mrs. Jim Litchfield, whom they attended at her wedding, all about new flat they have secured in Elizabeth Bay. Trio lunch at Romano's before Barbara returns to Hazeldean, Cooma.

RADIO call for Mrs. F. D. Buxton, of Darling Point, is from daughter Joan, who says "Hello" from the Lakemba as she sails for Honolulu on way home. After stay there with Colonel A. J. McLeod, of the U.S. Army, and Mrs. McLeod, Joan arrives home on October 5. During four months' trip Joan tours North and South America and Canada.

• • •

CHEERY party given by Mr. and Mrs. Reg Lane at their Neutral Bay home in honor of South African Broadcasting Corporation director-general, Gideon Roos.

Highlight of party is entry after buffet supper of three of the Lanes' children, Lynette, Peter, and Ian, with large decorated cake singing, "If we'd known you were coming we'd have baked a cake!" Inscription on cake read "To Gideon Roos from the Kangaroos." While fun was going on two younger children, Rosemary and Jennifer, in pale pink flower-sprigged pyjamas, peered sleepily over the bannisters.

Lots of broadcasting personalities at party, including interstate visitors. Bill Davies came from Hobart, Randall White from Melbourne, and W. Christensen from Bundaberg. Also among guests were the Stan Cricks, Charles Moses, Don Services, Jack Horners, Patrick Jubbs, and the Bennie Coombes.

• • •

BRIEFLY . . . October will see return of Mrs. D. M. Rofe to Mosman home after reunion in Japan with her son Captain Arthur Rofe and his wife, formerly English lass Patricia Ride. Couple have month-old girl, Judith Patricia. . . . Lorna Cooke, of Lismore, spends vacation with Mr. and Mrs. Harley Ward, of Mountain View, Narrabri.

FELICITATIONS on all sides for popular Roslyn Bowman, whose engagement to Peter Terrey is announced. Roslyn, who is eldest daughter of Mrs. Bowman, of Archerfield, Singleton, and the late Mr. Arthur Bowman, plans marriage towards end of year, and is already engaged with trousseau shopping. She is hoping her sister, Alison Berry-Smith, will be down from Manus Island in time for the wedding. Her husband, Lieut.-Commander Philip Berry-Smith, will join her early in the new year.

• • •

POPULAR couple Ken and Annette Bieri decide to name their baby daughter Georgina. Annette is home again now from St. Luke's, and is busy comparing notes on her baby with her sister, Sue Fairfax, who is down from Tarcutta.

• • •

THOSE enterprising young business women, Beth and Jill Campbell, who run Searchers' Agency in London with Maitland Levy and Michael Blakemore, have a regular visitor in Pamela Warrender. Pam, who has settled into a flat in Upper Grosvenor Street with her husband, the Honorable Simon Warrender, patronises Searchers' laundry service. Pam, formerly Pam Myer, of Melbourne, brings all Simon's shirts to the little office in Shepherd's Market.

• • •

TWO weeks' honeymoon on North Coast for June and Brian Southwell, who were married recently at Wesley Chapel. Brian's father, the Rev. N. J. Southwell, performed the ceremony. Bridegroom, who is Rev. and Mrs. Southwell's eldest son, is a librarian at Fisher Library.

Anne

PLANNING PARTY. In sunny gardens of Kinnell, Elizabeth Bay, Mrs. Millard Hagon (left), Mrs. Frank Louat, and Mrs. Odillo Maher discuss final details of novel party, "Headlines and Highballs," to be held there this Wednesday to aid Anti-T.B. Association.

RECEIVING DEB. Air-Marshal R. Williams and Mrs. Williams receive curtsy from Joan Boyce, who makes her debut at Air Force Association Ball at Trocadero. Squadron-Leader John Waddy at left.

WED AT ST. JAMES'. Peter Venn Smith and his bride, formerly Shirley Parsons, younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. W. E. Parsons, of Artarmon, leave church after marriage.

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£6,000 Big Spring Double

3 BIG FIRST PRIZES
OF A 12 H.P.
VAUXHALL SEDAN

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- **12** SIMPSON WASHING MACHINES
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381 PRIZES IN ALL

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2. Study the six facts about Rinso listed in this advertisement and ask yourself which fact appeals to you most. Put the figure 1 in the square beside it. Place the figure 2 against the fact which appeals to you next, and so on, down the whole list of Rinso points until you have placed them all in what you consider their correct order of importance from 1 to 6. Then do exactly the same for the facts about Lifebuoy, putting them in what you consider their correct order of importance from 1 to 6.

3. Complete the sentence about Lifebuoy using no more than an additional 12 words.

DO NOT SEND IN THIS ADVERTISEMENT, but use the official entry form obtainable from your chemist or store and post to "Rinso/Lifebuoy Spring Double Contest," Box 4984, G.P.O., Sydney.

CORRECT ORDER OF PLACING AND MAJOR PRIZE-WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON "AUSTRALIA'S AMATEUR HOUR," NOVEMBER 16.

THE RINSO FORM GUIDE

- ☐ Rinso saves work in the kitchen as well as in the laundry.
- ☐ Rinso has magic in its thicker, richer suds.
- ☐ Rinso is used by more women than any other washday soap in the world.
- ☐ Rinso gets greasy dishes sparkling in a jiffy.
- ☐ Rinso washes whiter and brighter than brand-new.
- ☐ Rinso is best for everything.

THE LIFEBUOY FORM GUIDE

- ☐ Lifebuoy's rich, creamy lather contains a special health ingredient.
- ☐ Lifebuoy protects kiddies from the dangers in dirt.
- ☐ Lifebuoy has a new, refreshing fragrance.
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- ☐ Lifebuoy helps you make friends.
- ☐ Lifebuoy gives all-over protection that lasts all day.

I always use New Refined Lifebuoy because .....
(complete this sentence in no more than 12 words)

GET FREE ENTRY FORM FROM YOUR CHEMIST OR STORE.

Contest closes October 19th 1950

ZW.1.WW143

You Belong To Me

Continued from page 10

JULIET sprang up in one supple movement. "'Do you want to kill me? Do you think I can bear t. live for days and days with every knock at the door—every footstep—giving me a spasm of terror . . .'"

She stopped, grimaced, and pushed her hair back.

"It's no good, Rose. I'm going stale. I just can't do it! I can't do it, I say! And my whole life depends on it."

"Really, Juliet, you are selfish. To say that at this moment . . ." murmured their mother, shocked.

Rose, at the top of the steps, pulled out starched folds, looked down, smiling.

"It's all right, Juliet. And you'll sail through, you see. It's just the part for you. You really can give the air of authentic passion, and you don't really hate people. You wait till you've had a success, and the curtain swings up and down, and the clapping hands look like a sea of beating wings. Then you'll love people. You see."

Juliet hugged her sister's ankles penitently.

"Don't die young, Rose."

"That's Victorian. Everybody's far too busy to die nowadays."

"Rose, you mustn't sound too brisk and businesslike," sighed her mother. "I suppose it's being with white papers and back-benchers and permanent under secretaries and things, but it's not really attractive."

Juliet gurgled into laughter.

"You're unbelievable, Mummy . . ."

And then lapsing into gloom.

"But will I, will I be able to make any kind of a show at that part, Rose? How does she strike you? What did the author mean her to be?"

Rose spoke with a drag in her soft voice.

"A woman in love for the first time. A woman in love, watching love go . . ."

Their mother got up, pulled her skirt into place.

"You ought to be out in the fresh air. I'm just going out myself. I thought I might . . ."

"Oh, not another new hat, Mother. Please, please, darling, not another!" Rose laughed at her mother, although she was thinking with despair of the three pound notes she had left folded into the grocery book on the kitchen dresser.

"I've got the most fearful headache," said Juliet suddenly, "perhaps I will go out."

Rose sat down on the top step of the ladder. The window was wide open, and the clean curtains immediately billowed into the room.

Mixed sounds of screaming and of flying feet came down the stairs and the passage.

"Those idiots!" said Juliet. "There's a devil in this family today."

"He's going to kill me! I'm terrified!" yelled Margot, managing to do a most effective entrechat just before the door of the p.g.'s room.

"They're just going to the door, I think," said her mother with interest. "Somebody is knocking."

"Wonder if it's for me?" said Juliet, disappearing.

Listening with one ear to sounds from below, her mother looked at Rose and wondered how she and Barney had managed to have her at all, so reserved, so untemperamental, so different from the other three.

"Have I ever told you, darling, about how Barney and I came to call you Rose?" she asked, longing to comfort her daughter, but in the face of her remoteness not knowing how to do so. "Barney and I had been to see 'Le Spectre de la Rose,' and we were so happy. It was my last outing before you were born, and we decided then that if you were a girl we would call you Rose."

"Yes, you have told me, dearest, and it is very sweet," said Rose. "Perhaps you'll see Margot dance it one day."

"I'll go and see what they're doing downstairs," said her mother. "All three of them in the hall like that and all of them silent . . . I wonder."

Rose still sat on the top step of the ladder, looking out on the hurrying day. A fortnight ago she and Howard had decided to spend this day in the country. They would both be free, and it was not very often that they could hold between their four hands the solid treasure of a free day.

When they arranged that, smiling at each other through the telephone—strange how one can hear smiles—they had both thought of the last time they had spent a day in the sun. A day mostly of silence, of recuperation from the sheer need to be with each other, a need which could be so like an illness. And at the end of it looking at each other and saying:

"We had so much to say, and we have hardly talked at all!"

The stillness and isolation of pain. Somewhere she had read about a heart disease in which one of the chief symptoms was a desire to keep quite still. In this pain was the terrible spiritual need for stillness. I must just exist. Not move. And she was alone—quite alone in her feckless, charming family. Now that Howard had gone she had no relief, no escape into the quiet rational spaces of his mind.

The almost articulate gaiety of the windy day stabbed at her. On just such a day she had walked hand in hand with him, and he had lifted their laced fingers and said:

"You complete me."

THE others were ascending the stairs in a mass, and Rose braced herself. The very sound of their feet suggested that they had thought of something gay and delightful, and it was going to take all her endurance to be with them and not spoil their fun.

Piers came prancing through the door carrying a big wicker basket full of roses. Dozens of them, dewy and flushed.

"No prize for guessing who they're from!"

Rose, holding the letter which had lain among the flowers, still sat on the steps and looked down on them. All so handsome, so eager, each such a problem.

They watched her with expectant, dancing eyes as she read.

"I must have been mad, first to dream that I could ever do without you, or that I could force you away from people who need you as much as I do. Forgive me and love me and take me back. Nothing will be too difficult if we share it. The thing that is impossible is being apart. I want to spoil you—spoil you more than you've ever spoilt your outrageous family. Let me.

Howard."

Under the sea the iceberg was melting, the long impossible years dwindling to moments too short for love.

"I suppose this might be called a lavish display," said Juliet. "Mightn't it?"

Pleasant to think he's got money, at any rate, thought their mother. No use pretending it doesn't make his faults seem less important.

Margot put the basket of flowers on her lap.

"Are you going to be happy now, Rose?" she asked. "To please us?"

Rose put her hands among the cool flowers and smiled.

"Well!" Her mother sighed long and luxuriously. "Now we can do something gay and enjoy it, instead of pretending we were. How very clever of Howard! He must have known that the family machine needed just this little drop of oil!"

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Don't be a slavey, says U. S. home expert

Learn these tricks and become a social asset to your family

By SHEILA PATRICK, staff reporter

Mrs. Ida Bailey Allen, American cook and home-maker, is amazed at the way Australian housewives wear themselves out doing housework, especially in their kitchens.

Before returning to America Mrs. Allen gave me a message for the women of Australia.

MRS. Allen, who with her singing chef, Charles Premmac, has been on a two months' tour of the eastern States of Australia, conducts a daily newspaper cookery column in America for more than 22,000,000 readers.

"Please, dear housewives, don't be so conscientious," she said. "Don't slave until your hands are red raw and your backs so bent that you are no longer a social asset to your family.

"It's a husband's privilege to come home to a happy, rested wife.

"If you take a few of the hints which we women in America have discovered your home will be much happier."

Mrs. Allen advocates:

- A long-handled scrubbing brush to avoid "down on the knees" scrubbing.
- Rubber gloves for hot water work, and detergents (special chemical soaps which are good to hands) for washing greasy things.
- That housewives get washing machines by hook, crook, or on time payment. If the husband isn't interested, let him do the family wash one week; that will convert him, says Mrs. Allen.
- Raising tables, tubs, and other work-benches to a comfortable level. This can be done with bricks or blocks of wood.
- Reorganisation of the kitchen so that all utensils, spices, and seasonings are handy.
- Not drying the dishes. It saves time, tea-towels, and it's cleaner to place washed dishes in a wire drainer, pour boiling water over them, and leave to dry.
- Refusing to carry heavy string bags. Buy or make a wheel shopper or persuade women friends to share expeditious in their cars.

"Make a list of the next day's jobs each night," added Mrs. Allen. "This way jobs are done much quicker. Do the easy ones first. Tick each one off triumphantly as it's finished. It's good psychologically."

Mrs. Allen said that American women who have learned housecraft have time for relaxation, hobbies, clubs, and are social assets to their families.

Mrs. Allen stressed the importance of color in the home.

"Bright colors in the kitchen and a gay house dress have a wonderful effect on the housewife as well as her family," she said.

"Don't be drab and wear broken-down old shoes in the house. It's bad for the family and also for your feet."

Mrs. Allen likes Australian food.

"Biggest surprise of all is your pumpkin," she said. "It is inexpensive, and rich in vitamin A. The way Australian housewives serve it baked with a roast is delicious.

"I am taking back a recipe for pumpkin scones, which I had not heard of before.

"Another idea I have caught from Australian housewives is the steamed pudding habit. I am going to introduce it to America."

She said the best doughnuts she'd ever tasted were made by an Adelaide cook.

"I was surprised, because America is the home of doughnuts," she said. "I am taking the recipe home. I have called them Australian-American doughnuts."

Here is the recipe for Australian-American doughnuts:

Sift 4 cups of plain flour with ½ teaspoon of salt and 3 teaspoons of baking powder into a bowl. Add 1 cup of sugar, 1 teaspoon of vanilla, and half cup of butter or margarine. Blend with a heavy mixing spoon. Add 2 beaten eggs and enough cold water (about ¾ cup) to make a heavy dough that can be rolled to ¼-inch thickness on a slightly floured board. Cut into 2-inch rounds.

In a heavy saucepan heat enough vegetable fat to make a depth of 4 inches. When hot enough to brown a bit of bread in 1 minute, gently slide in the doughnuts. Fry till golden on one side, turn, and brown the other. Allow 5 minutes altogether. Roll in sugar and serve with honey or maple syrup. Makes 16.

MRS. IDA BAILEY ALLEN.

Mrs. Allen said a Tasmanian woman sent her a recipe for lemon cheese made with Spanish squash. "This is another of my trophies," she added.

Mrs. Allen likes the Australian habit of having coffee in the lounge at hotels and at home, and the way we use cheese.

"Cheese with sliced tomatoes, celery, lettuce, and dry biscuits is a fine finish to a meal," she said.

"I also like the way you serve sandwiches with morning and afternoon tea. They are varied and dainty. Your bread is very crisp. American bread is too soft."

Things Mrs. Allen does not like about Australian cooking methods include:

- Soft and greasy bacon. It should be crisp.
- Weak coffee served with cold instead of hot milk. Australians should double the amount of grains in the pot.
- Too much frying. Grilling and roasting mean better health.

She makes these suggestions:

- Drink more soups, especially peasant types such as minestrone, cockie-leekie, lentil, and bean. They are nutritious, cheap, and easy to prepare.
- Make oyster stews.

This is Mrs. Allen's recipe for cockie-leekie soup:

Clean a 4lb. fowl, squeeze out the pin feathers, scrub with mild soapy water, and rinse thoroughly. Put in a saucepan with half tablespoon of lemon juice and ¼ cup of fine diced lean bacon. Add 2 teaspoons of salt, ¼ teaspoon of pepper, ½ teaspoon of nutmeg, and boiling water to cover (about 2½ quarts). Simmer with lid on until fowl is fork-tender (from 2½ to 3 hours).

Strain off the stock, skim off the fat. Add 6 cleaned, coarse-chopped leeks, simmer until tender (about 30 minutes). Add ¾ cup of diced white meat from the fowl. Heat, and serve garnished with thin slices of lemon topped with minced parsley. Left-over meat may be used to make a chicken loaf.

Mrs. Allen also suggests that we eat more salads in winter and summer. Americans like cole slaw, which is made of shredded cabbage, seasoned to taste and tossed in a dressing of equal parts of white vinegar and oil with a squeeze of lemon juice. All salad greens should be torn, not cut, into bite-sized pieces.

For economy, she says, make up a vegetable dish of "left-overs" by serving cooked beetroot stems and turnip greens with lemon juice and butter.

For luxury, cut a pocket in a thick piece of steak, stuff with oysters, crumbs, parsley, and butter, grill until nearly done, and finish in the oven.

FREE NOVEL NEXT WEEK

In our next issue we bring you a free lift-out novel, "Shadow Across My Heart," by popular romantic writer Jennifer Ames.

The novel is an adventure romance set in the French Riviera.

It is the story of a girl who delightedly accepts a position as governess, but is shocked to discover that her handsome employer is suspected of having murdered two wives and is known locally as "Bluebeard."

The subsequent developments make thrilling reading.

Mr. PHILIP WIRTH

Ringmaster of Wirth's Circus, says:—

"Small's Club Chocolate gets top billing from me."

Famous Wirth's Circus was founded over 70 years ago by Mr. Philip Wirth's father and three uncles. The Circus has been on two world tours . . . has survived earthquakes in New Zealand and a flood at West Wyalong, N.S.W. "The Greatest Show on Earth" owns over 60 wild animals . . . even has its own Zoo. There are more people working on the labour staff now than there were in the whole Circus when the show first started. These days it takes a special train half a mile long—longer than two Melbourne expresses—to move Wirth's Circus from one town to another.

"Chocolate experts have told me that the louder the snap the better the chocolate," says Mr. Wirth. "Well, take it from me, Small's Club Chocolate snaps with a crack like the lion-tamer's whip. It's *the* quality chocolate with that not-so-sweet flavour. I give it top billing every time."

Small's make *Great Chocolate*

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Jacket, sizes 32 and 34in. bust, 26/6; 36 and 38in. bust, 27/9. Postage, 1/6 extra.

Shorts, sizes 24½, 26, 28, 30, and 32in. waist, 16/9. Postage, 1/6 extra.

"THERESA."—Smart one-piece with peaked collar and big pockets finished with flap on skirt, which has inverted pleat in front. Available in spotted spun material, in green, aqua, saxe-blue, navy, all with white spots.

Ready To Wear: Sizes 32 and 34in. bust, 77/3; 36 and 38in. bust, 79/9. Postage on each, 2/- extra.

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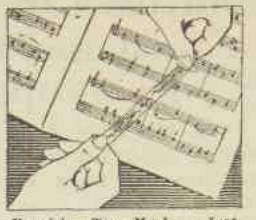

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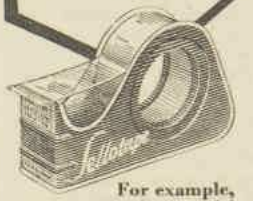

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Because 5 New York doctors now have proved you may break the laxative habit . . . and establish your natural powers of regularity. 85% of the cases tested did it. So can you.

Stop taking whatever you now take. Instead: Every night for one week take 2 Carter's Little Liver Pills. 2nd week—one each night. 3rd week—one every other night. Then—nothing! Every day: drink eight glasses of water; set a definite time for regularity.

Carter's Little Liver Pills "unblock" the lower digestive tract and from then on let it make use of its own natural powers.

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WORTH Reporting

AMERICAN square dancing, which is Sydney's latest enthusiasm, has had a small following here since 1947.

Mr. Webster Powell, who was Labor attache at the American Embassy, and his wife formed a group among their friends.

When the Powells returned to America, Mr. and Mrs. D. G. Apsey, of Cammeray, took over the singing and calling, which is the expert's part in the group.

The dances they do are the "Good Morning" group. Most are set to the melodies of Stephen Foster.

Their pianist is Mr. Sid Ross.

The group now has 30 members, ranging in age from 20 to 60.

Mrs. Apsey says it takes about six weeks for a newcomer to master the simpler dances, but with an expert partner he can join in the fun straight away.

Mrs. Apsey taught members of the cast of the folk-play, "Dark of the Moon," an American barn dance.

Since American expert Mr. Joe Lewis gave demonstrations in Sydney Mrs. Apsey has been asked by the Australian Broadcasting Commission Staff Social Club to instruct the members in square dancing.

There are about 80 members and they intend to meet every week.

Members of the Cremorne Group don't wear special hillbilly fashions, but generally dress in cottons for the women and open-necked shirts for the men, for comfort.

The group's next meeting will be Tuesday evening, October 3, at Warringah Hall, Neutral Bay.

Two members, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Salmon, have formed a group at North Rocks, near Carlingford.

Mrs. Apsey says anyone who is interested in forming a group may ring her at XA2432, or write to her at Flat 3, 273 Ernest Street, Cammeray. She is willing to help free of charge.

* * *

GIVE credit where credit is due.

The handbag department of a large city store was the scene of one of those oh-so-polite wrangles between the elegant floorwalker and a determined customer.

The customer wanted to return a snakeskin handbag, the lining of which had run.

"I can only conclude," the floorwalker said, with a frozen glance at the handbag, held fastidiously between his thumb and finger, "that Madam took the handbag out in the rain."

"Well," said Madam, a glint of triumph in her eye, "after all, it is a waterintake."

"Tell Ann not to hurry—we aren't going anywhere!"

Models of historic ships in Melbourne exhibition

THIRTY valuable model ships, ranging from the early Australian sailing ships to the latest in liners, are being shown at the National Museum in Melbourne against a background of Australian shipping history.

Organised by Assistant Librarian Mr. J. A. Feeley and Mr. R. H. Fowler, from the Museum of Applied Science, the exhibition was opened by Vice-Admiral J. A. Collins.

Leading shipping companies have all co-operated in lending full-scale models.

Half the exhibits come from the Museum of Applied Science and private individuals have also lent some.

Protected by glass cases, the models are from five to 26 feet long.

From points all over Australia they were despatched by rail, car, and steamship, and insured during transit for many thousands of pounds.

Famous models, including Captain Cook's Endeavour, the Edina (the world's oldest steamship), the clipper Glenhuntly (known as the ill-fated "fever ship"), lie side by side with such streamlined ships as the Himalaya and Moreton Bay.

Early watercolors of sailing ships form a background for the models.

Ships' documents, yellowed and frail with age, are other historical exhibits.

They include the complete manifest of the Thistle (the ship which brought the Henty family to Portland), century-old newspapers printed on board to while away the tedium of a six months' voyage to Australia, and original manuscripts of music dedicated to ships.

Headaches are pain in the neck to doctor

ONE of the men on our editorial staff gave us a headache explaining about his eye doctor, whose obsession is headaches.

Our colleague mentioned, while having some eye treatment, that he suffered with headaches.

"Do you work with women?" the doctor barked.

"Yes."

"Then you'll always have headaches."

A few weeks later our colleague's wife was told by the same doctor that she'd have to change her sex before she could get rid of headaches.

It got curiouser and curiouser when finally a doctor friend of theirs went to the same eye specialist. He asked her if she suffered with headaches, and she said no.

"You must," he growled. "All women do."

* * *

OUR fancy was tickled, if our palate was not, by "Saute mushroom stems," listed on the menu of a large city restaurant.

Plain-clothes woman likes pretty clothes

FIRST woman detective in Australia is Grace Brebner, who was at one time the first constable in the Victorian Police Force.

She is quite a mystery woman. Police regulations decree that she shall not be photographed, and nobody is telling just what is the nature of the detecting work she is doing.

Miss Brebner is a small, pretty, young woman with bright blue eyes and a ready smile.

She is thrilled with her new job. She took on police work eight years ago because she wanted a job that offered a little excitement.

Miss Brebner has never worn a uniform. "I hate the thought of one," she said. "I prefer to wear frocks."

* * *

A COLLEAGUE slipped into a cafe for a cup of coffee one morning recently and shared a table with a young man and woman.

She sat fascinated watching the young man's lips move continuously while no sound came from them. She turned to the young woman, who sat tight-lipped while a stream of patter emerged from her closed mouth.

Our friend grabbed her hat and ran. She was relieved when the cashier explained that the young man was a ventriloquist at a night-club who had been practising his act.

Swimmer's sacrifice to help friend

AMONG all the ballyhoo of this year's English Channel swim, Anne Matheson, of our London staff, found this tiny story of one girl's kindness and self-sacrifice to help another win.

When 22-year-old Eileen Fenton, who won the women's section, was within an hour of the English shore, she lost the use of one arm through straining a shoulder-muscle.

Mary Bailey, a teenager from Eileen's Yorkshire home town, was in the launch following Eileen.

She saw the swimmer weakening and made a big decision.

Throwing away her amateur status by accompanying a swimmer in a race for a prize of money, Mary plunged in beside Eileen to give her encouragement.

"Mary's gentle words of encouragement were all that kept me going over that last lap," Eileen told Anne Matheson.

My favorite poem

Here is the favorite poem of another of our readers, Miss P. G. Phillipson, of Elizabeth Bay Rd., Elizabeth Bay (N.S.W.).
Send us your favorite lines. They may be a complete poem or an excerpt.

LEAVE thy father, leave thy mother
And thy brother;
Leave the black tents of thy tribe apart!
Am I not thy father and thy brother,
And thy mother?
And thou—what needest with thy tribe's black tents
Who hast the red pavilion of my heart?

—From Arab Love Song, by Francis Thompson.

Are WIND and SUN HARD ON YOUR SKIN?

Read how this practical, time-saving
HOME BEAUTY TREATMENT
gives outdoor girls a lovely skin

This is important news for girls who love the outdoor life, but find that their skin is not standing up to the coarsening, drying effects of sun and wind. You *can* keep your skin looking really lovely with this widely-used home beauty treatment. It's the kind of skin care you could spend hours on at expensive Beauty Salons, but now so easy to do yourself.

What you do is give yourself a quick beauty-facial every night with Skin Deep Facial. It takes only a few minutes in your own home. This entirely new kind of facial cream is winning almost fanatical devotion from those who find out about it.

The important feature of Skin Deep Facial is that it nourishes the deep under-skin; you can tell this at once by the surprising way it goes *right into your skin.* No elaborate massage is needed; scientific tests have proved that the skin soaks up 87% more Skin Deep Facial than the average face cream! Skin Deep Facial carries deep into the skin the vital things it needs to keep young-looking.

Just smooth this life-giving beauty cream lightly over your face and neck *every night at bedtime.* Skin Deep Facial is so nice to use because it disappears into the skin quickly and doesn't leave a greasy layer on the surface. And so refreshing! All the tiredness and tautness leave your skin at once.

Regular nightly facials bring about quite exciting improvements in your skin within a few days! All signs of roughness, coarseness or patchiness are soon softened away. *Ask any girl who uses Skin Deep Facial*—and she will tell you how true this is. Skin Deep Facial is highly recommended by chemists, who understand the scientific features of this important new development in skin care.

Start your home beauty treatment to-night. Thousands of girls in England and Australia already use Skin Deep Facial regularly. You can get it at any Chemist or Department Store. 5/- for a large treatment-size jar.

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Everyone Needs a Pet

Continued from page 5

WHEN I finally ordered my meal I didn't have the steak. I had the hamburger instead. It turned out that I wasn't as hungry as I'd imagined.

I thought about Mrs. Doyle. No doubt the problem of caring for three uninhibited puppies would shorten her life. I had taken advantage of a loving disposition for base reasons.

Then there was the granddaughter. I wondered if she had a gentleman friend. Probably she had them in droves; and probably every one of them was unworthy to touch the hem of her dress, even presuming she would let them do such an unlikely thing. A girl as good-looking as that should have someone with a sure knowledge of the ways of the world to protect her.

I spruced up as best I could. I needed a haircut, but it had been a long time since I could afford one. The grey suit was not too bad. The face—well, it would have to do. It was not handsome. It was just thin and dark, and it looked a trifle cynical for its twenty-seven years.

I reached the Doyle home shortly after eight. The house was a narrow, two-story affair that needed paint. It had "widow on small pension" written all over it.

I thought a moment. The visit might be ill-advised. I didn't have the money to buy back the puppies. Mrs. Doyle probably had half a dozen grandsons, all honor graduates of the commando school. Then I heard a soprano bark inside, followed by a series of barks. I pushed the bell.

After a time Mrs. Doyle opened the door. She looked at me doubtfully.

"There seems to be a misunderstanding," I said. "I had a little chat with your granddaughter to-day. I gathered that she is not a dog lover."

"Well, it isn't that," Mrs. Doyle said. "Only I sort of got carried away, and you told me what fine dogs these were, and when Marjorie—"

"Charming. It fits her to a T."

"What?" Mrs. Doyle said.

"Marjorie," I said. The I said, "Ouch!" I reached down and disengaged the cross-eyed pup from my ankle. He took away most of my sock with him. "Cute little nipper," I said. "Wonderful teeth, too."

"Well, you might as well come in," Mrs. Doyle said.

The three puppies led us to the living-room. They obviously felt completely at home.

"It was really my fault," Mrs. Doyle said. "I should have realised. But you said three would be as easy as one and—"

I was wondering where Marjorie was. I was also wondering where to get thirty shillings. It looked as if the pawnbroker were going to take over my watch.

"Mrs. Doyle," I said, "I'm going to tell you the truth."

Just then the door opened. Marjorie came in, and there was a young man of about my age and size with her.

Marjorie stopped just inside the door. She gave me a look that had no welcome in it. She said, "So here you are. Grandma, is the silver locked up?"

"Marjorie!" Mrs. Doyle said. "What a way to talk."

"She's right, Marjorie," I said. "It's no way to talk."

"I heard about you," the man said. "Shall we step outside, or will I have to carry you?"

"I can hardly wait," I said. "Your insurance all paid up?"

"On you," he said, "what I am going to do will look good."

"You look like a character I knew in the Philippines," I said. "He never came back. There were no tears."

"What were you doing in the Philippines?" Marjorie said. "Working for the Japs?"

"I was flying aeroplanes," I said. I had one eye on the boy-friend and the other on her. "Until one of them fell down. Law of gravity, you know. Then they put me on ice for quite a while."

"I didn't know they had camps for conscientious objectors so far away," the boy-friend said. "Live and learn."

I was getting annoyed. I said, "Shall we dance, sweetheart?"

Mrs. Doyle said, "Stop it, all of you." She had a kind and gentle face, but I saw there was iron in her. "I'm sure, Mister—I'm afraid I didn't catch—"

"Webster. Tony Webster."

"I'm sure Mr. Webster came here for a good purpose. The least we can do is to hear what he has to say."

"Thank you," I said. "I'll make it quick. I lied about those puppies. I wanted to make the sale. I haven't got enough money to buy them back to-night. But I'll get it to-morrow. That's all."

MARJORIE didn't seem to like my explanations and excuses. "By to-morrow," she said, "he'll probably be in the next State."

"Good-night," I said with dignity, and moved towards the front door.

Marjorie came with me. "I just want to see that you go without taking any souvenirs of a delightful occasion," she said.

I opened the door and stepped outside.

"Was that true about you being in the Philippines?" she said.

"Yes. Drop in and read my papers sometime. Any time."

She looked down. "A brother of mine was killed there," she said.

"I'm sorry," I said. "It was a very rough place at times."

She looked up suddenly, her eyes furious. "It's amazing," she said, "when you think of some of the people who came out of it and some of the people who didn't. It makes no sense. Well, don't let me keep you. Maybe you've got some other old lady to cheat before you hit the downy pillow."

Once again I thought the vehemence was a little forced. I smiled at her. "A girl with your spirit," I said, "ought to be able to do a whole lot better than the chap in there. Think it over."

I went home. I knew that a realist would say I had let sentiment run away with me. Those were perfectly good pups. I had built them up a little too much, perhaps, but that only showed my enterprise as a salesman. The price, when you considered the box of Super-Dog Banquet, was not really out of line. And who knew?—perhaps there would be a Bimini spaniel one day, and these pups would be the progenitors of a great breed. Also, I hated to part with my watch. But what was done was done.

A happy thought came to me just as I turned the light out. I might be able to borrow enough on the watch to buy back the pups and take Marjorie out to a modest dinner. When I made good my promise she would see me in a new perspective. A face like mine could stand a change of perspective now and then—especially when the girl looking at it was as pretty as Marjorie.

Next morning lightning struck. The man with the poodle paid for the collar and bought a leash and an identification tag. The woman who had been thinking about the bird cage came in for it. I sold two boxes of Super-Dog Banquet and one of Rover's Delight.

SO I still had my money and my watch. Then a man with a beetle brow came in to inquire about a dog.

"I got rats," he said. "I want a rat dog."

"This is certainly a coincidence, sir," I said. "Later on to-day I'll have some of the finest rat dogs in the country."

"What brand?" he said.

"Bimini rat terriers. Undoubtedly you've heard of them."

"Sure," he said. "I'll look, but I ain't making no promises to buy. I own the Happy Tavern. We live in the back. Those rats are something fierce."

At five o'clock I went to Mrs. Doyle's. Marjorie wasn't home. It seemed that she worked downtown, and often was late. Mrs. Doyle and the three puppies were in the living-room.

"Madam, I have your thirty shillings," I said.

She looked as if she were on the verge of tears. "Mr. Webster," she said, "Marjorie was a little hasty. There's no reason why I shouldn't have a dog."

"All right," I said. "I'll take two back then. But tell Marjorie I came to make full restitution."

"I will, Mr. Webster. I was thinking—well, if I kept two they might be quieter. Company for each other, you know. So if you'll take back just one—I'm not sure about the money part, but I think—"

"Here you are, Mrs. Doyle," I said. I counted out ten shillings. Then I reluctantly added five more to it. "Fifteen it is. You're getting half your money back and you're keeping two thirds of the pups. The food is yours too. No one can complain about that. Now, which shall I take?" I said.

Please turn to page 26

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Size	13	14	14½	16	16½	17	18	18½
Bust	32½	33½	33½	35	35½	34½	36	37
Waist	26	26½	28	27½	30	29	30	32
Seat	35	36	37	38½	38½	37½	40	40½
Length	46	46	46	47	46	48	49	47

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HAZEL

"Some enchanted evening . . ."

BUTCH

"The guy next door spoke well of you. He told me your things were much more valuable than his old junk."

It seems to me . . .

By

Dorothy Drain in Japan

ONE of the most vivid things in John Hersey's book "Hiroshima" was the description of the Japanese Christian minister, who, after the bomb, was running through the crowds looking for his wife, and kept bowing to the maimed and wounded and dying, apologising for being all right himself.

When I first read that I believed it described some peculiarly Japanese trait. Now I have been in Korea I know that it is merely a particular kind of expression of a universal feeling. You understand it when you see wounded men who are casualties of war. It is a feeling of apology for being healthy and unharmed while they're suffering. You don't express it in the way the Japanese minister did, but psychologically it's the same thing.

* * *

I ONCE read a book by an American woman war correspondent who arrived in Paris on the day it fell.

It seemed extremely silly timing to me, but I know better now. The closer you get to the centre of a war the less you understand the picture as a whole. In Korea, I got my clearest picture of what was happening round me by listening to Radio Australia!

It's the old story. You see and hear what's happening round you, and you lose the broad view of it. You hear a Press briefing, with some off the record information as well. And rumors, rumors, rumors.

* * *

SINCE Marguerite Higgins was allowed back to Korea by General MacArthur, there have been a few American women correspondents in and out of Korea at intervals.

But the women correspondents, like the men, are scattered all over the area, returning to billets to write their stories and sleep, flying to Japan when they can for a bath. A tap with running water is a luxury you encounter only occasionally. There are few modern buildings in the towns of Southern Korea. A few Japanese-built schools and here and there a mission-house provide some places for billets and headquarters.

But everywhere there is dust and squalor. It is impossible to keep clean riding along the roads amid clouds of yellow dust, or mud puddles if it rains.

"War makes all countries like this," a Royal Air Force officer remarked. "This could be North Africa," he said, looking out at the airstrip with its ceaseless traffic of planes.

But driving along the narrow, rough roads, with the dingy thatched cottages and hordes of grimy, ragged children, you sometimes look over the dust-shrouded pumpkin vines on the roofs and fences to the poplar trees standing round houses in the rice fields. The tall poplars make you think for a minute of a French landscape—but it doesn't smell like a French landscape, and the thought is momentary.

* * *

I DON'T remember any gloomier moment on this assignment than when in the rainy dusk I rode in an army bus, driven by a Korean, to the town of Pusan on the day I arrived.

The hordes of brown faces by the roadside, the knowledge that it was impossible to tell a North Korean from a South Korean by appearance, the negro M.P.'s at the check points on the crowded roads, all combined with the damp driving rain to give me a feeling of depressed astonishment that I had ever come to such a place.

THE U.S. Air Force now has negroes scattered throughout its units doing all kinds of jobs according to their ability. Since the order was made about 18 months ago, so a chaplain told me, the scheme has worked very well. There are negro pilots, as well as in many other musterings, and the men live and eat in the same billets as white servicemen with practically no trouble caused by racial discrimination.

* * *

BEFORE I left for Korea an Australian army officer told me, "There's a vast difference between battle and war, though people use the word war to mean both."

In Korea the two are so close that correspondents at Taegu could leave their billets in the morning, visit the lines, and return for lunch.

Casualties among correspondents have been high, the danger of being cut off on the roads is continually present. I met one correspondent from an American agency who had been cut off at a command post for three days.

"I was still taking names and addresses of people I was talking to," he said, "when it began to dawn on me that I might never get the story back."

* * *

I MET a French correspondent who had had a cable from his paper praising his story on the landing of British troops in Korea.

"But it was so easy to write," he said. "They came ashore so smartly, and when I saw them, and I heard the bagpipes, I was inspired!"

* * *

THE train that I travelled on through Southern Japan to an airfield for the take-off to Korea epitomised the situation in Japan, with its contrasts of the former occupation life, and the war.

When I went to the dining-car for breakfast I passed through Pullmans packed with Korea-bound troops, stepping gingerly over a rifle here and there.

The dining-car was civilisation itself—iced water, tomato juice, good coffee, polished silver, white tablecloths, and service. I talked there to an American nurse who had visited Japan for pleasure before the second world war.

When I went back through the Pullmans, to be impressed afresh with the helmets, the guns, and the jungle greens, my compartment had filled up with pretty mothers and babies in gay clothes.

They were American dependants moving to another area. Many of the women had husbands fighting in Korea. In their pretty frocks, looking after their children, and chattering, they were a sight that I think afterwards many of those men in the Pullmans would remember as the last glimpse of home.

* * *

AS I was about to board a truck for the plane, a U.S. Air Force colonel in a car called out, "Would you like a lift to town?"

"I'm going to Korea," I called back.

"You can have it," he said. "We've just come from there."

Dorothy Drain's Korean war story, see page 15.

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Says Jane Powell

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Everyone Needs a Pet

Continued from page 24

MRS. DOYLE looked from one to the other, with those gentle, maternal eyes. "I just can't pick the one to send away, Mr. Webster," she said. "You'll have to do it. I'll step out of the room and you choose."

"Very well," I said. "Just remember this is all your doing. By the way, I hope you won't mind my dropping in now and then to see how your pups are getting along. The Acme Pet Shop does not consider a sale closed when the money is paid. Our interest goes on and on."

"That's very kind of you, I'm sure," she said, and left.

I picked up the white-faced pup, which was eating my cuff. As I closed the door I decided that the shop's interest in Mrs. Doyle's livestock would be intense. I would make my calls later in the evening, when Marjorie would be home.

I caught the owner of the Happy Tavern when business was slack. "That doesn't look like a Bimini rat terrier to me," he said.

"Maybe you've only seen the crossbred ones," I said. "This is the goods."

He said, "How much?"

"Twenty," I said. "I don't want to commit financial suicide. But when I take a liking to a man I'm unpredictable."

"Ten," he said.

"Fifteen," I said. "I should have my head examined. Both my heads."

"Ten. Ten or nothing."

"Ten or nothing," I said.

The next day, just about closing time, I was reading a compelling piece in "Pet Shop Reporter" about how to double your turnover of lovebirds, when the door opened. I looked up idly.

"You," Marjorie said. "Come here, you."

"This is a certain sameness to our conversations," I said. "My friends call me Tony. 'You' seems a little cold."

"Grandma is crying her heart out," she said.

"I offered to take them all back," I said. "I'm still game. I'll make you a deal, Marjorie. We'll have a nice quiet dinner somewhere. Then I'll pick up the rest of the covey. Do spaniels come in coveys or gaggles? I forget."

She was wearing a green dress that went wonderfully with her hair. She had one of those figures that seemed better every time you saw it.

"Squirming won't help you," she said. "You knew the white-faced one was Grandma's favorite. She'd named him Georgie."

"Marjorie," I said, "this time I'm innocent. She told me to pick one at random, and Georgie was firmly attached to my pants."

"Also," she said, "you had to pick the one who gave me a present."

I leaned on the showcase. We were very close together. Then she drew back and stamped her foot.

"He brought me my shoe," she said. "Just as if he were giving me a present. I know that was what he meant. But he didn't have any way to get a present of his own, so he had to pick up something around the house. He only chewed it a little bit. What did you do with Georgie?"

"Look," I said. "I'm sorry. I really am. But I didn't know, and Grandma said, and—well, I sold Georgie."

"You had it planned all the time, you heartless trafficker. You knew Grandma loved Georgie, and you knew he gave me a present, and you took him out of meanness. You stole him, practically. Who did you sell Georgie to?"

"The man who owns the Happy Tavern," I said. "He wanted a ratter. Maybe Georgie is a ratter. Maybe his whole soul is bound up in ratting."

"Oh!" she said. She took a deep breath, and it was something to see. "You sold him to that awful place where he'll be abused night and day. You couldn't have been kind and murdered him. No. You had to sell him into an atmosphere in which he may very well take to drink himself."

She opened the door. "Just wait till I tell Harry and then see what happens to you. I have to work tonight, but I'll get Harry to-morrow. If you know what's good for you, you'll join the Navy. Selling our Georgie to—" She was gone.

I thought it all over, very carefully. I told myself that a wise man always leaves well enough alone. Then I did exactly what I'd known I was going to do.

I was at the Happy Tavern at nine. The owner was busy, so I had to wait. I bought a cup of coffee. Georgie wasn't in sight and I wondered how he was making out with the rats. Then I heard his shrill bark in the distance and immediately afterwards there was a yipe and an angry female voice said something I couldn't catch. But the implication was clear.

Shortly before ten, trade slowed down and the beetle-browed owner came over.

"Sir," I said, "I came here to confess a mistake. That dog I sold you isn't a Bimini rat terrier. He's just a mongrel. But the Acme Pet Shop makes good. Here's you money back."

"That's right handsome," he said. "But I kind of like him."

I smiled. It was supposed to be a friendly, we're-all-boys-together smile. "Also, he was promised to someone else," I said. "Just another little mistake, you see. I don't know why anyone would want such a mutt, but this party does. Here's twelve shillings, and if I can ever serve you in the future, just let me know."

WITH a friendly smile the man said, "I don't know why I'm doing this. It must be because we're pals, and I never let a pal down. Not me. He's yours for twenty-five."

"Twenty-five," I said. "Twenty-five!"

"I know I'm crazy," he said. "But don't bother to thank me again. Just slip me the twenty-five and he's all yours, Mac."

"Fifteen," I said.

"Twenty-five."

"Twenty," I said. "And not another single, solitary—"

"Twenty-five, Mac."

"I'll be back," I said.

The pawnbroker was still open, and he let me have thirty shillings on the watch.

When I returned to the Happy Tavern, Georgie was in a box, all ready to go. I paid over the money.

"You're not as good a stayer as I thought," the owner said. "You could have had him for ten."

I started down the street with Georgie in his box. He made whimpering sounds, and he obviously needed petting. I put him in my overcoat pocket and obliged.

It was close to eleven, but if Georgie was wanted as badly as I'd been told, he'd be welcome at any hour. I turned towards Mrs. Doyle's. I thought that I must be the only businessman in the world who could go broke faster by doing business than by not doing business.

There was no one about on Summer Street. Then a taxi came by and stopped in front of Mrs. Doyle's house. Marjorie got out and the taxi moved off.

Please turn to page 27

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Everyone Needs a Pet

Continued from page 26

CAREFULLY I removed Georgie from my pocket. The lining came with him. I said, "Hello, Marjorie."

"You," she said. "So now you're trailing me. When I tell Harry—"

"Dear Harry," I said. "Do you think he'd like to go steady with me? Here's your mastiff."

Georgie looked at the house. His nose moved like a rabbit's. Then he began to scream. There were only three pounds of Georgie, but his scream could have been heard a mile away. There were answering barks from inside.

"He seems to feel at home," I said, when Georgie stopped screaming long enough to breathe. "It must be true love. Come to think of it, both Georgie and I—"

"Look!" Marjorie said. "It's on fire!"

I looked. Smoke was coming out of the second story of the Doyle house. Back of the smoke I saw flame.

"Tony!" Marjorie said. She sounded almost like Georgie. "That's Grandma's bedroom. She uses that old oil-heater and — do something, Tony! I've forgotten my keys."

It was the first time she'd called me Tony. I put Georgie down. "Ring the fire brigade alarm," I said. "There's a telephone box on the corner." I started up the steps, and Georgie, still screaming, was at my heels.

I put my shoulder against the door and pushed. It was a strong door. Inside I heard more screaming—this would be Georgie's brother and sister. I moved back and threw myself at the door. I bounced. On the fourth try the lock gave. In the distance a siren howled. It made almost as much noise as the Bimini spaniels.

I found the switch for the hall light. Mrs. Doyle was coming down the stairs, wearing an old bathrobe, with a puppy under each arm. Georgie dashed forward and leaped up on her.

"They woke me up," Mrs. Doyle said. "They made all that noise, and I woke up, and there was all that smoke and then—"

I said, "Thank Georgie. He woke them up. Here's the fire brigade. Let's go."

It wasn't much of a fire. The firemen put it out and the damage was confined to the one bedroom. They had insurance, Mrs. Doyle said. Then she picked up Georgie, and he made a sound that meant he was a proud and happy dog. "They woke me up," Mrs. Doyle repeated. She was holding all three puppies in her arms. She kissed them, one by one, on their muzzles.

After the firemen had gone Mrs. Doyle said, "Mr. Webster, I don't know how to thank you. If you'll come in, I think we can all do with a cup of coffee."

"Probably he started the fire," Marjorie said. "He's deep and devious."

"In that case," I said, "I will say good-night."

"Oh, be quiet," Marjorie said. "Come in for a cup of coffee."

"That was exactly what I intended to do," I said. "You hold no surprises for me. Or do you?"

"My beautiful Bimini spaniels," Mrs. Doyle said. "My beautiful, brave, intelligent Bimini spaniels. I always knew I had to have all of you."

Mrs. Doyle made the coffee. Then she said she would leave us. She would sleep in the spare room, and she was tired. Also, she had to see her Bimini spaniels got their rest.

I looked at my wrist, where my watch used to be. I remembered that the pawnbroker had it.

"I suppose I ought to go," I said. "It was quite an evening."

"Finish your coffee," Marjorie said. "You can even have another cup." She was wearing a double-breasted suit that—well, it was quite a suit. "Did you really buy Georgie back for Gandma?"

At last, I thought, she is softening towards me. "Yes," I said, "I did. As for starting the fire—well, I didn't. But I probably would have if I'd thought of it."

"It's possible," she said, "that you saved Grandma's life."

"Let's credit that to Georgie," I said.

"Have it your way," she said. "Now, about that pet shop of yours. Things are a little slow, aren't they?"

"That's one way of putting it," I said. "I like understatement."

"What you need," she said, "is more build-up. Publicity. Friends. Sell the idea that everybody needs a pet. They do. Then they have to buy food for their pets. Cause and effect. So all are happy and prosperous. We might even be able to delude the public into believing that you are a true animal lover."

"Thank you," I said. "Only right now, at this moment—" I stopped talking, and started to work on the principle that action was better than words.

"You'd better go," she said. "It's very late. You heard me, Tony."

At the door I put my arm around her. This time she stayed put. I kissed her, and she responded. "As for Harry," I said, "I will meet Harry on any duelling ground he may choose, and—"

"Harry," she said. "What brought Harry up? He's my cousin, and you'll like him."

"After hearing that," I said, "I love Harry."

She gave me a shove towards the steps. It was a gentle shove. "How about to-morrow night?" I said.

"All right," she said. I could see her perfect white teeth in the glow from the street lamp.

"One thing more," she said. "I didn't really think you were working for the Japanese in the Philippines." She closed the door. But she closed it so lightly you could hardly hear the latch click.

We were married a month later. She said not to worry about a honeymoon—we could have that later, after the money flowed in. But we did have a wonderful week-end at the beach.

That Monday morning we bought four nondescript puppies and put them in the window. That afternoon an elderly woman came in and said, "What kind of puppies are those?"

She was a kind-faced woman. "Madam," I said, "those are Bimini spaniels. A rare breed. Equally at home in the house and in the hunting field. It was only by great good luck that we got those superb specimens."

"Well," the kind-faced woman said, "well thank you, but—"

I felt a small fist against my back. It was Marjorie's fist, and a very pretty fist it is, too. "Don't listen to him," Marjorie said. "They're just plain puppies. But they're nice puppies, and they haven't any fleas, because I looked them over before we bought them, and they'll make delightful pets. We're offering them at seven and six apiece, and that's a fair price. No papers. No pedigree. Just puppies."

"I'll take that one," the kind-faced woman said. "The one with the black front paw."

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DO you snatch your sleep in fits and starts, between twists and turns to find a more comfortable position?

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TALKING OF FILMS

By M. J. McMAHON

★★ *John Loves Mary*

NORMAN KRASNA'S wartime comedy reaches the screen taking much the same shape and form as the original stage play.

Warners' film is an overlong piece of charm and intermittent sparkle about John Lawrence, the very foolish G.I. who feels so indebted to the pal who saved his life on the battlefield that he marries the friend's English girl-friend so that she can enter the United States.

The plot is a skimpy affair hinging on mixed situations, and begins when John returns from four years of war to the loving arms of his fiancee, Mary McKinley. They plan an early wedding.

Imagine the young man's consternation upon learning that his buddy has married someone else and is about to become a father; when he is faced with explaining away the English war bride after she lands, and when he has to delay his own wedding long enough to wangle his freedom from Virginia Field's blowsy Lilly.

All this and more involves likeable Ronald Reagan, heading the small, hand-picked cast, and Jack Carson, who burlesques his comedy role to the hilt.

Newcomer Pat Neal brings a touch of youthful dizziness to her pretty Mary McKinley, as well as warmth and humor.

It is Edward Arnold, however, who contributes the shrewdest piece of acting as Mary's father and pompous man-of-affairs, Senator McKinley. In Sydney—the Century.

★★ *Curtain Call at Cactus Creek*

TALENTED, sprightly Donald O'Connor scampers through some comical situations in Universal's minor film of cheerful tone and technicolor brilliance.

As boy-of-all-work around an old-time travelling vaudeville show, which has Vincent Price as hammy hero and proprietor, and comedienne Eve Arden as statuesque leading lady, his followers will find the fun to their taste and liking.

By blatantly overplaying their lines in the manner of the day, Price and Arden merit a share of the limelight.

O'Connor wants to perform behind the footlights too, but doesn't get to first base with selfish Price until genial bank-robber Walter Brennan, using the show to cover up gang activities, forces the issue at gunpoint. The lad makes a hit.

Some people may feel that rather too much footage is devoted to the stage displays. Otherwise "Curtain Call" moves along at a brisk pace with music and dance interpolations woven into the doings to give the young star his chance to entertain.

Gale Storm provides romantic interest as well as some vocals and dancing. In Sydney—the Victory.

★ *Duchess of Idaho*

A THEME that develops along hackneyed muscial lines makes M.G.M.'s "Duchess of Idaho" so-so entertainment.

Audiences have travelled the same path too often to mistake the glitter, color, and glamor that have been massed around this production for worthwhile subject matter.

Using beautiful Sun Valley as the locale, and introducing popular Esther Williams, Van Johnson, Paula Raymond, and John Lund to hold attention as the romancing quartet, events follow an unimaginative pattern of emotional involvement, misunderstanding, and complication from the opening shots until the four pair off for the happy ending.

Their work is as good as the material allows.

Esther Williams glides through a spectacular swim number or two to prove her aquatic prowess, while Van Johnson alternates songs with scowls as the band-leader at the snow resort.

The potato dance that these two perform in a Sun Valley contest is a change from unbroken squares.

Paula Raymond brings intelligence as well as charm to her role as the guileless secretary who has a yen for her playboy boss, John Lund.

Guest stars Eleanor Powell, doing a fast boogie tap, Lena Horne, and Red Skelton take brief bows, while Clinton Sundberg carries off the comedy honors for his playing of Lund's supercilious valet.

In Sydney—the St. James.

★ *Christopher Columbus*

GAINSBOROUGH'S romanticised biography of Christopher Columbus, the 15th century navigator who is popularly credited with having discovered America, is ambling, colored, and quite synthetic.

There is always a movie market for adventure stories, but this screenplay by Britain's Muriel and Sydney Box wears a fatuous expression rather than an aura of high achievement.

In the title role that good actor Frederic March manages to bring little relief to the tedium of events that neither grip nor seem possible in terms of place or period.

Five years—the equivalent of 40 minutes celluloid—are spent in trying to persuade Queen Isabella of Spain (Florence Eldridge) to finance the expedition that is destined to blaze the western sea-route to the rich, new world of America.

Francis L. Sullivan's mountainous Francisco de Bobadilla is arch saboteur of the undertaking.

Time marches on again before the voyagers eventually reach Cuba. Fortunately, the run home is speedier.

From among the main cast members James Robertson Justice, Felix Aylmer, and Nora Swinburne emerge with dignity.

In Sydney—the Embassy.

WORLD-FAMED DANCING STARS Tony and Sally De Marco were joined by Marie McDonald (left) and Dorothy Hart, two of filmland's loveliest young actresses, when the dancing pair read congratulatory telegrams upon their sixth wedding anniversary.

ON OTHER PAGES:

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THE WAGONMASTER, Page 54

Kaye's party a wow

By cable from LEE CARROLL in Hollywood

DANNY KAYE'S party for Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh at the Beverly Hills Hotel will long be remembered in Hollywood. For Danny and his wife the party was quite a headache—not because of those invited, but on account of those not asked.

Given for friends of both the Kayes and Oliviers, it was limited to 160 guests. Most of the lighting came from huge red candles surrounded by flowers on tables, which made the glamorous stars present look more so. Among those present were the Sam Goldwyns, the Gregory Pecks, Lana Turner and Bob Topping, the Jascha Heifetzes, Gene Tierney and Ezio Pinza, Louis B. Mayer and Herbert Marshall and their respective wives.

* * *

PRODUCER Irving Allen cancelled the proposed European production of "The Man Who Watched the Trains Go By," which originally had the starring role all lined up for Charles Boyer. Now Allen will make arrangements for a Hollywood filming. It seems that unsettled world conditions are responsible for the producer's change of plans.

* * *

THERE is a serious father-son conflict at Harold Lloyd's home. Young Harold junior, who appeared in one Goldwyn film, wants to continue in pictures. But his father insists that he graduate from college first. Keeping it secret from the boy, Lloyd also requested the studios to refrain from giving Junior any roles whatsoever. The truth of the matter is that Lloyd knows his son has little acting talent, but the eighteen - year - old youth typically mistook the publicity given his first screen appearance for the real thing. So he may walk out of the parental home to seek brighter vistas elsewhere.

* * *

RAMON NAVARRO may soon have the distinction of playing his own father 27 years after he starred in the silent version of M.G.M.'s "Scaramouche." Back in 1923 the father role was played by Lewis Stone. Now, if the studio will meet Navarro's demand, he will join Stewart Granger in the new "Scaramouche" as the father, and will undoubtedly have some valuable pointers for the British actor.

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DOLLY MADISON: *First "First Lady"*

FAMOUS WOMEN

● Until the advent of Eleanor Roosevelt no United States President's wife ever matched the fame of Dolly Madison, the simple Quaker girl who has gone down in American history as the first famous hostess in that country of famous and fabulous hostesses.

DOLLY MADISON, wife of early U.S. President James Madison, who started life as a simple Quaker girl, but became the first famous hostess of America.

DOLLY, who never did anything great or extraordinary during her lifetime, has been dead for a century now, but biographers are still seeking information about her, and a film, "The Magnificent Doll," was made of her life.

Unlike Mrs. Roosevelt, she never took an active interest in politics, but contented herself with being the gracious and beautiful wife of President James Madison, whose administration was one of the most turbulent in United States history.

The girl who grew up in a strict Quaker household, which eschewed all luxury and glamor, had three years of protected married life before her Quaker husband died of yellow fever. She then married an eminent American and adorned the stately White House as First Lady of the Land.

She was tremendously popular. When famous American statesman Henry Clay, who forced Dolly's husband into the declaration of war against Great Britain in 1812, remarked, "Everybody loves Mrs. Madison," she replied, "Mrs. Madison loves everybody."

She had one great trouble which nagged at her brilliant existence, and brought her heartbreak. Her son, Payne Todd, born of her first marriage, was a spendthrift and a scapegrace whose only interest in his mother was centred in what he could get out of her.

While Dolly's intelligent feminine charm and stout heart were undoubtedly her greatest assets, her beauty was not far behind.

Her black hair, blue eyes, and rose-leaf complexion played havoc with male hearts, and during her brief year of widowhood after the death of her first husband, a Quaker friend said to her, during a walk, "Really, Dolly, thou must hide thy face, there are so many staring at thee."

During her childhood her mother made her wear "a white linen mask to keep every ray of sunshine from her complexion, a sunbonnet sewed on her head every morning, and long gloves covering the hands and arms."

Dolly's life, after she married Madison, was bound up with famous American personalities.

No matter who rose and fell in power or what political trials came Madison's way, Dolly remained a serene, amiable wife who also functioned as the guardian of manners and inspiration of social gaiety in the then infant capital city of Washington.

Dolly was born on May 20, 1768, in Virginia, where her parents, John and Mary Payne, had a small plantation. Her attractive mother was the daughter of generations of Quakers, but John Payne grew up to the life of a worldly Virginian, which he abandoned when he married Mary and embraced the Quaker faith.

The Paynes lived by the Book of Discipline. They progressed in 1775 to a large plantation, "Scotchtown," which had many slaves, and John Payne achieved the Quaker status of Public Friend, which allowed him to preach.

Throughout the Paynes' peaceful existence at "Scotchtown" the Revolutionary War raged, but it did not affect their lives, for Quakers had a plain commandment to abstain from war.

Yet the family's happy life was plagued by a sense of sin. The Society of Friends held it as a doctrine that slavery was wrong and tried for years to get permission to free their slaves.

As soon as it was legally possible, in 1782, the Paynes were among the first Quakers to free their slaves. They then "left Virginia for Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, bearing with them their nine children to be educated in their religion."

The Paynes promptly presented their credentials to the Quakers' Northern District monthly meeting, which received them with respect, and John Payne went into business as a starchmaker, something he knew nothing at all about.

In 1789 his starchmaking business went into bankruptcy, and the Pine Street Meeting, in Quaker custom, publicly disowned him "for failure to pay his debts."

Despite her obscure life as a correct Quaker maiden, Dolly was a thoroughly happy girl. The Quakers, who believed in early marriages, allowed their boys and girls to mix together without too strict chaperonage, and Dolly, with her flowering beauty and amiable nature, became a ladylike and successful flirt.

When Dolly was 22 she married John Todd, a young lawyer who had assisted her father financially. It was said that while he was hopelessly in love with her she married him because of his aid to her father.

She was a devoted wife and they had two children. But the marriage was of short duration, for, after three years, her husband and three-weeks-old baby died during an epidemic of yellow fever. Dolly managed to survive an attack of it.

Todd left Dolly, then 26 and in the full bloom of her beauty, and their young son fairly well off.

After a period of mourning Dolly took daily promenades along the fashionable thoroughfares of Philadelphia. Among the strangers who admired her blue-eyed beauty and the touch of distinction she could always give to a plain Quaker costume was James Madison.

He begged to be introduced to her, and Dolly wrote to a friend, "Thou must come to me. The great little Madison has asked to be brought to see me this evening."

Madison was then 43, and everyone thought him a confirmed bachelor, smarting under the humiliation of having been jilted by a young woman who discarded him for a clergyman, who, as Madison said, "hung over her harpsichord."

Small-statured, colorless, and sedate, he was a learned man with a complete education. He was comfortably well off, and a true patriot wrapped up in his country.

They were married at her sister's home in Virginia on September 15, 1794.

Her Quaker sodality promptly declared her to be no longer a member of the Society of Friends because she had "disregarded the wholesome order of our discipline in the accomplishment of her marriage with a person not in membership with us, before a hireling priest."

She served a hard social apprenticeship because they were married at a time of great political heat, and she had to entertain the great and small of the government and distinguished foreign visitors.

She quickly learned to enhance her beauty with elegant dressing, but retained many of her Quaker principles. Although she dressed well for entertaining and social occasions, she always wore at home in the mornings the plain stuff gown and white apron of a Quaker housewife.

When Congress moved to Washington the Madisons rented a new Georgetown house into which they moved in 1801. They lived there for eight years, until Madison became President and they went to live in the President's mansion.

Dolly "took Washington." President Jefferson, a widower, had no official hostess, and relied more and more on Dolly, who, as the wife of the Secretary of State, was high in prestige.

When she became mistress of the White House, therefore, she was familiar with every nook and corner of it.

At the inauguration ball she wore buff velvet with pearls on her neck and arms, and a Parisian hat, probably one of the first in America, adorned with an awe-inspiring bird of paradise plume.

As President's wife she held Wednesday receptions which were known as "Mrs. Madison's levees." One well-known New York man who received an invitation to one of these wrote of the "blazing splendor of Mrs. Madison's drawing-room."

At Madison's frequent dinner-parties she gracefully took the reins and "glided with distinguished ease into the stream of conversation with its endless variety."

When the war between Great Britain and the United States broke out in 1812 Dolly continued to dispense her hospitalities with skill and decorum, and a British admiral sent a jocular message that he "would soon dine in Washington and make his bow in Mrs. Madison's drawing-room."

When Washington was burned by the British it was Dolly who saved the large portrait of General Washington, which hung in the White House, and the Declaration of Independence. When the war was over she resumed her gay life, as First Lady of the Land, in the private home which was the official residence until the White House was rebuilt.

At the end of Madison's second term they retired to Montpellier, the vast Virginia estate which had been the Madison family home for three generations.

They lived as quiet a country life as hordes of visitors would permit. Dolly related quite casually, in a letter to a friend, that they had "ninety guests for dinner the other day, three of them being women." She added that it was "less trouble than 25 in Washington."

No children were born of the Madison marriage, but James Madison always behaved as a generous father to Payne Todd, the son of Dolly's marriage to John Todd.

Payne Todd became a burden to both Dolly and Madison. He was addicted to drink, was always hopelessly in debt, and showed only an apathetic affection for his always-forgiving mother and kind stepfather.

After some years of patient indulgence, despite his own dwindling finances, Madison realised that his stepson would never amount to anything, but Dolly, with a mother's fond blindness, would not admit it until the last years of her life.

After Madison's death Payne Todd was given the task of managing Montpellier, while Dolly, who loved her Washington triumphs, returned to the Capital to live.

But the worthless Payne Todd made no effort to run Montpellier successfully. Money became so scarce that Dolly had first of all to mortgage her Washington home and then finally sell Montpellier.

She lived on the verge of bankruptcy until Congress established a trust fund for her a year before her death.

Despite the cramping effect of poverty and the private pangs of heartbreak, Dolly was brave and brilliant and beautiful to the last. She still held her court, with her neck covered with tulle, as "after 70 the throat is apt to be a little scraggy."

She became increasingly reticent about her age, and when the Congress trust fund made her financially stable she put off making a will. But the golden trust fund became fixed in Payne Todd's mind, and a month before her death, in July, 1849, he induced his mother to sign a will, drawn up in his handwriting, leaving everything to him.

He did not get any of her hundreds of friends to witness it, but, instead, brought in two strangers from the street. One of them afterwards said that Dolly "was a long, long time signing the paper."

Dolly was then 81, and the whole sordid business, conducted with as much haste and secrecy as Payne Todd could muster, must have harshly revealed to her at last the cunning worthlessness of her son.

She immediately took to her bed and was only fitfully conscious until her death a month later. During one of her periods of consciousness she asked her nephew, an attorney, to draw up a fresh will dividing her trust fund between her son and Annie Payne, a niece who had given years of devoted companionship to Dolly.

Her conscience seemed to demand this new will. Her nephew had to lift her up and hold her hand while she scrawled her signature. She died three days later.

She was mourned as one of the first citizens of the country and given a magnificent funeral.

Her son tried to break his mother's will but failed, and he died a lonely figure in an obscure hotel two years later.

Dolly Madison had a career of extraordinary length and brightness, but just before her death she told a young woman in trouble over some trifle: "My dear, do not trouble about it—there is nothing in this world really worth caring for."

The story of Dolly Madison is told in "Dolly Madison, Her Life and Times," by Katherine Susan Anthony, and "Happy Women," by Myrtle Reed.

IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY — *By GUS*

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the sweet enchantment of a soft moulded line . . .

"Arietta," the new, bewitching Brassiere by Berlei, conspires with your natural loveliness to achieve a shape, curved, soft, widely separated and so very fashionable. You may wonder how a mere wisp of lace can give such wonderful support, but, of course, the "spreading petal" reinforcement under each bust cup is the secret . . . an *exclusive* "Arietta" secret.

"Arietta" Berlette in dainty lace, fully lined for durability. Shaped reinforcement under bust gives perfect support and a lovely natural line. Made in both small and junior fittings.

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"Arietta" waist-depth Brassiere for the medium full bust. Made in satin twill with lace bust sections. Others in batiste for full and deep bustlines, some with built-up shoulders.

"Arietta" by Berlei

WITH THE "SPREADING PETAL" SUPPORT

Arietta by Berlei

Look for this exclusive "Arietta" Support.

You'll recognise an "Arietta" Brassiere by this special "spreading petal" supporting fabric fitted into the inside of each bust cup. Always ask your Corsetiere to show you this unique feature, for from it stem the wonderful uplift, comfort and lovely line that distinguish "Arietta" by Berlei as the Brassiere of the year. There are adjustable shoulder straps for easy comfort . . . hard-wearing materials for frequent laundering, and, above all, a wide range of fittings in various lengths to fit six bust shapes . . . from small to the full, matronly figure. Ask to be personally fitted to your "Arietta" Brassiere by Berlei. Prices from 19/6 to 36/6.

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Beauty blossoms
IN INNOXA LABORATORIES

Never again need you worry about the "difficult" skin problems of acne, pimples, blackheads and open pores. These blemishes, which so often mar an otherwise lovely complexion, can now be banished forever. Years of patient research in the Innoxa Laboratories have yielded a treatment which is the first real relief ever developed for these problems . . . . SOLUTION 41.

INNOXA SOLUTION 41 is one of the most amazing preparations to come from the Innoxa Laboratories. Realising that no cosmetics can conceal the blemishes of an unhealthy skin, world-famous skin-specialist, Dr. Francois Debat, devoted all his skill to the development of this new treatment which acts on the basic cause of difficult skin troubles. After countless experiments, Solution 41 was perfected. It was tested on hundreds of people — young men and women, adults, even children — and in every case results were satisfactory. Even the most stubborn cases of adolescent acne respond to Solution 41, a colourless liquid which may, if necessary, be used under make-up. No matter how long your "difficult" skin condition has persisted, Solution 41 will clear away unsightly blemishes, revealing the natural beauty of a smooth, healthy complexion.

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MRS. JEANNETTE PETHEBRIDGE making lace at her home.

Woman revives lost art of lace-making

Sole exhibitor of the ancient craft of lace-making at the Festival of Britain next year will be 69-year-old Mrs. Jeannette Pethebridge.

Mrs. Pethebridge has revived in England what was almost a dead art.

SHE is a west countrywoman by birth, now living in a neat suburban London house with her husband, a retired bank manager. After 40 years of lace-making she describes herself as a self-taught amateur.

Mrs. Pethebridge jokingly says she started making lace to have something to do while her husband was playing bowls. Mr. Pethebridge helps his wife with her hobby, which has now become almost an industry. He calls himself her "unpaid secretary."

Mrs. Pethebridge shares the pleasures of bowling with her husband, often accompanies him on inter-county bowling tours.

Mrs. Pethebridge's lace-making suddenly became popular when Queen Mary's hand-made carpet began earning dollars in the U.S. Her book "A Manual of Lace," followed by publicity in the British Press, brought her fan mail from many parts of the world, including Australia.

Would-be lace-makers requested lessons by mail and asked her where to buy the necessary materials to begin the hobby.

The British Board of Trade has helped Mrs. Pethebridge to find in England suppliers of linen thread, special lace pins, and bobbins. The information she sends to America means more dollars for Britain.

Added to these dollars will be the American earnings of the "Manual of Lace," which will soon tour the U.S. on the non-fiction book mobile of the British Book Centre.

As a follow-up to her manual, Mrs. Pethebridge has written an encyclopaedia of needlework, which is now being published.

One American woman has already learned the craft from Mrs. Pethebridge's instructions and designs. She is Mrs. Vera Seidenbecker, of Chicago, who is now lecturing American women on lace-making.

Mrs. Pethebridge says her designs "just come to her." She literally dreamed up the piece she is at present creating.

One night she awakened from a dream in which she saw clearly a complete picture of the design, shape, and size of a cellist's veil. Mrs. Pethebridge had never actually seen such a veil, and believed that they had not been made for centuries.

After a search she found a veil described in a catalogue in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington. The veil, made in the 17th century, fitted the details of her dream. Only discrepancy was in size. The dream version was 18 inches square and the actual antique veil 21 inches.

Mrs. Pethebridge is working against time to finish her veil for the October show of the Arts and Crafts Society. For a 69-year-old woman who has to cope with a two-story, four-bedroomed house that is quite an effort.

When her only son, Denis, was a schoolboy, Mrs. Pethebridge began making a Limerick lace wedding veil for her granddaughter, then a small child.

She finished it while Denis was a prisoner of war for four years in Malaya.

Mrs. Pethebridge says reminiscently: "While Denis was a prisoner, I think that the veil was the only thing that kept me sane. We had only three postcards from him in four years. If I hadn't had the lace-work I would have gone mad."

The veil is now on show at the Craft Centre of Great Britain at Hay Hill, London.

From MARCIA PICKARD, in London

Included in Mrs. Pethebridge's collection is a sample of lace found in a disbanded Spanish convent. It is true Point d'Alencon, found unfinished, with a tiny fine thread and needle still hanging loose where the maker had laid down her work. It is thought that the lace was begun early in the 18th century. Mrs. Pethebridge has followed the detail and finished the sample.

In 1938 Mrs. Pethebridge made a set of lace table-mats for Queen Mary's doll's house at Windsor Castle. Queen Mary wrote a letter of thanks and praised her work.

Mrs. Pethebridge also has an old-fashioned lace-maker's table, with narrow sliding draw filled with token bobbins of ivory, old receipts for lace orders, and hand-made pins which shame the mass-produced articles of to-day.

The token bobbins are survivals of the time when a young girl would be given as a gesture of love a bobbin with her own name engraved on it, or the name of her sweetheart. Intertwined hearts and both names were also popular motifs.

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STANDING on a water-smoothed rock near the bank of frozen Spencer's Creek, in Kosciusko country, hydrographer's assistant Theo Hadkins takes a reading from a river gauge for the Water Conservation Commission of N.S.W. Gauge shows height of the creek. Theo has removed his skis to get close to the gauge.

GOOD COOK. Theo Hadkins whips up a batch of scones in the well-equipped kitchen of Adam's Hut. Theo thinks nothing of baking scones or biscuits when visitors drop in unexpectedly.

THIS is the cosy two-roomed granite hut where Theo lives in alpine loneliness. Theo is a keen outdoor man, likes swimming and diving in the summer, drives his own M. G. sports car when in town.

Kosciusko's lonely bachelor

He lives by himself on Australia's rooftop to check on riverways

By SUE BARRIE

Lonely bachelor Theo Hadkins, 25-year-old hydrographer's assistant, lives by himself in Australia's highest permanent habitation, more than 6000 feet above sea level.

He is doing an important job for the Snowy River Scheme.

THEO works for the hydrographic branch of the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission.

He takes care of the instruments which gauge the flow of water in creeks feeding the Snowy.

He lives in Adam's Hut, a two-roomed granite dwelling at Spencer's Creek, Charlotte Pass, Kosciusko, near the projected site of the first dam in the Snowy scheme.

He skis more than 50 miles a week in all weathers, checking water flow meters to prevent them from icing.

"It's easy enough in fine weather," Theo told me when I interviewed him at Adam's Hut. "But sometimes it's necessary to go out in a blizzard. That's the tough part of the job."

In spite of disadvantages, suntanned, good-looking Theo likes his lonely life in the snow country.

"It's the ideal job," he says. "The ski-ing is wonderful and I'm not roughing it in this hut. It's really modern and convenient."

A hot water service, electric light, radio, fuel and kerosene stoves, and a pressure cooker make his bachelor existence comfortable. The bedroom has built-in cupboards and four wide wooden bunks. Below the living quarters are hot and cold showers, toilet, and well-equipped workshop.

Expert cook

COOKING is no problem to Theo.

He bakes his own cakes and scones in the fuel oven and cooks most of his meals in a pressure cooker on the kerosene stove.

"The pressure cooker is a great time-saver," he said. "I come in from a long trek in the snow and get a three-course meal in less than half an hour."

Theo, who is a fitter by trade, joined the Water Conservation Commission about a year ago because he liked ski-ing and the outdoor life. He doesn't drink or smoke, spends his spare time doing odd carpentry jobs or mending ski boots for members of the staff at the Chalet.

Supplies reach the hut regularly by snowmobile. If Theo wants extra stores he skis to the Kosciusko Hotel or Chalet, brings them back in a rucksack.

"I'm never lonely here," he said, as he brewed tea by a big log fire. "Ski-ing parties often drop in for a cup of tea or a meal."

Theo Hadkins' first duty during the winter months is to prevent the flow meters in his territory from icing, and so going out of action. He checks each instrument daily, more often in the depth of winter.

To help prevent icing of a flow meter, hydrographers install an insulated well in the river bank into which a pipe leads from the stream. The water in the well rises and falls with the river.

The float operating the recorder is floated in kerosene inside the well.

Kerosene freezes at a much lower temperature than water. Consequently, ice forms on the instrument only in extremely cold weather.

Between weeks of duty in the snow country, Theo may work for the Water Conservation Commission anywhere in New South Wales.

One of his assignments was gauging flood waters at Maitland.

Though city life does not appeal to him, Theo visits his parents in Sydney once a month. Another hydrographer's assistant takes over while he is away.

HAULING UP A DRUM of snow on giant weighing machine, Theo assesses weight of snow to discover its water content. This gives an indication of volume of water to be expected in rivers when thaw comes.

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Beutron OPAL-GLO

The beautiful iridescent button that always matches – never clashes. Beutron "picks up" any color – so be sure to choose Beutron Buttons

FOR FLORALS

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HOT IRONS CAN'T HURT THEM. YOU CAN TELL DRY CLEANERS THAT THEY'RE GUARANTEED.

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Is he Serious?

SUREST SIGN that a man is serious is his thoughtfulness to a girl when she feels ill and miserable and is a drag on party.

STRONG INDICATION of regard is shown by a confidential discussion of his personal affairs, business problems, and hopes.

★ *It isn't always easy to tell if a man's intentions are serious. But there are certain signs that can usually be taken as reliable indications. These pictures show three situations that are reassuring, and three that should make any girl in her senses think seriously before devoting very much more of her time to the man to whom they could be applied.*

DOUBTFUL. When he doesn't bother to see her home, it follows he doesn't care much.

ENCOURAGING. He doesn't care for cards, but because she's mad about canasta he lets her teach him. This could apply to any other interests.

WRITE HIM OFF if he makes a habit of last-minute invitations. They aren't complimentary. The man who does this is simply playing the field and making use of the girl.

PERSISTENT REFUSALS to meet her family almost certainly mean that he is finding excuses because he doesn't want to be involved.

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. . . **Betty Lou** Infants' frocks are made from exclusive Lucas Velsuede and Feathersheer loomknit fabrics or in superfine cottons . . . The adorable little styles are delicately trimmed with exquisite lace, embroidery and smocking.

For big occasions in little lives . . .

Whether Infants, Tots or 'Teens, little girls will look their sweetest and neatest for longest this summer in Lucas Frocks. In an exciting selection of styles, designs and colours, they are beautifully made and have good deep hems. Fabrics are cool-as-a-breeze, but long wearing . . . wrinkleproof . . . easy to wash and iron, too.

1.

1. **EVERLOC** JUNIOR 2. **floraloc** JUNIOR

Crease-resisting frocks . . . guaranteed washable. Just like Mummy's! Dozens of delightful styles and colours, in sizes for ages, from Tot to 'Teens.

3.

2.

LUCAS

Children's Wear

There's a store close by that stocks Lucas Children's Wear. Write us and we'll tell you where it is. E. Lucas & Co., 27 Flinders Lane, Melb.

3. **Betty Lou** Children's frocks in light-as-air Robia Voile wash and wear wonderfully . . . are sold in dainty colours and pretty party styles.

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The Australian Women's Weekly presents as a special feature a portfolio of

Australian Fashions

● Short evening dress in taffeta, with form - fitting bodice and white silk braiding, at left. Designed with full skirt, it is made in many colors. By Millerson Models. Priced about £14/3/7.

● Striped bolero frock, right, with white pique straps and turndown cuff neckline, has flapped pockets on very full skirt. May be selected with small or large stripes in assorted colors. By Fashion Pfeiffer. Priced about £5/12/0.

● The two charming cottons below provide high fashion note. Tangerine is used for the spotted dress and bolero of Italian poplin, right. By Sports de Jour. Priced about £8/16/9. The halter neckline and illusion bra-top sundress at left has matching bolero. By Cole of California. Priced about £5/19/6.

★ Summer's newest ideas have been exploited by Australian manufacturers in the frocks presented in our Australian Fashion Supplement. These inexpensive clothes, selected by us in a special survey, are the best sellers of the season. They will be found in leading stores throughout Australia, and they show the advance made in recent years by the dress industry here. The Australian Women's Weekly presents these fashions to Australian women throughout the Commonwealth so that they can see what is available in their own shops. Prices vary slightly in different States. Those given are average.

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Shimmering Loveliness

Shimmering loveliness truly describes the hair that's always nurtured by Marigny beauty aids.
All discriminating women realise just how important it is to keep their hair in faultless, eye-catching condition.
That's why well-groomed women everywhere **always** rely on Marigny for breathtaking hair beauty.

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OBTAINABLE AT HAIRDRESSERS, GOOD STORES AND CHEMISTS
MARIGNY LABORATORIES PTY. LTD., 177 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE; 39 PARK STREET, SYDNEY; AND ALL STATES

Our cover pattern

White redingote and spotted frock

A PATTERN of the smart edge-to-edge waffle pique redingote and frock, which appears on the cover, has been cut to enable readers to make this useful summer outfit for themselves. Frosty-white will have a great vogue this season and the laced version of the redingote, with its emphasised waistline, is practical and new.

F6132. Coat requires 4½yds. 36in. plain material, and dress 3½yds. 36in. width spotted material. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Price 2/3.

Parasol to match . . .

TO give your new summer outfit a dash of French chic, trim a long-handled umbrella with fabric to match your frock, like the one on our cover this week.

For the wide frill you will need a strip of material 9in. wide and 48in. long. Sew three rows of running thread down the centre of the strip, taking up about 2in. in width, and gather into a frill.

Take another strip of material, 2½in. wide by 24in. long, and again sew three rows of running thread down the centre to gather into a smaller ruffle at the base of the umbrella. For a neat finish, have both frills picot edged.

Two carnations, either fresh from your garden or the artificial variety, to tone with the fabric could be added for a festive occasion.

If the covering of your umbrella is in white taffeta, or nylon, or any neutral shade, different frills can be made to match any outfit in your wardrobe.

TRIMMED UMBRELLAS like this are not hard to make. If you have one in a basic color, it is a simple matter to dress it up for festive occasions.

Luxury embroidered and scalloped

(YET INEXPENSIVE)

Erin-Art
SHEETS
AND PILLOWCASES

Erin-Art sheets are available in all sizes, hemstitched and scalloped or plain; Erin-Art pillow cases are available hemstitched, embroidered or plain housewife style. All are made from finest quality linen-finish sheetings.

A PIONEER PRODUCT

Relieve NASAL SORENESS due to colds

Don't suffer—when your nose feels dried out, or sore, apply Cuticura Ointment to aid quick relief. Always keep a tin handy—good for cuts, bruises and sores. One of the famous trio—Cuticura Ointment, Soap and Talcum Powder. 535

Cuticura OINTMENT

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Stay as sweet as you are with
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Australian Fashions

Trim Swimsuits

★ Sunny days ahead for summer's favorite sport—swimming. These attractive costumes are ideal for Australian girls, who are noted for their sports prowess as well as their smart beach appearance.

Six colorful swimsuits chosen from the stocks of four of Australia's topline manufacturers are shown here. Considered to be the season's best sellers, they all have a good bra-line and firm figure control.

● Tailored dressmaker suit, above, with elasticised trunks. Named Seasport, it is by Cole of California. Priced about £4/5/-. Ideal for yachting.

● Solow, a suit with a plunge neckline, made of English lastex, printed with a music pattern. By Scamp. Priced about £4/17/-.

● Seasiren, a one-piece cotton tailored bathing suit, right, has a gathered uplift bra, and there are fourteen color combinations available in this attractive style. By Cole of California. Priced about £3/9/11.

● Newest combination of burnt-orange and black is used in this suit which has a halter neckline and gathered bra, left. By Sports de Jour. Priced about £5/19/8.

● Tailored one-piece suit of satin lastex, left, which may be worn strapless. Made in most colors. By Sports de Jour. Priced about £5/2/7.

● Sweetyou, a suit of floral velvasheen cord fabric, right, combining rayon, cotton, and laton. Made by Jantzen, it is priced about £2/19/6.

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"IS that little girl really me?" said Alice.

"Step into Bond's Undieland and see," said the Looking Glass.

"If I do," said Alice, "may I have that lovely pair of pyjamas I'm wearing in there for my very own?"

Yes, Alice — you and every other little girl may have pyjamas like that for your very own. Just imagine—a pair of pyjamas as pretty as Mummy's, made in dull-finish rayon with all that lovely embroidery! Just step through the magic looking glass into Bond's Undieland, Alice. So Alice stepped through the looking glass and her latest adventure began.

Alice in Bond's Undieland!

(Adventure No. 1)

"Just fancy," said Alice to the Queen of Hearts, "this is the first adventure I've had in years."

"About time, too," said the Queen of Hearts. "You must be tired of that dress you've been wearing since 1865."

"So I am," cried Alice, slipping off her dress and all of her calico petticoats and her bodice. "From now on I'm going to be as modern and as dainty as can be!"

"So you are," said the Queen of Hearts, "and we'll start with pretty Bond's True-size Underlovelies just like grown-up ladies wear! Which color do you like? Pink or white?"

"Pink to start off with," said Alice; and in a wonderland wink of the eye she was in a dull-finish rayon locknit vest with the daintiest pair of pantees to match.

"Extra length in that vest, too, my dear," the Queen of Hearts informed her, "in case you should ever start growing up. Which I hope you won't. But, oh dear, other little girls do grow up so rapidly I don't know how their mothers would ever keep them in pretty vests if it weren't for Bond's."

Bond's make their Tru-size vests and panties from unshrinkable wool-and-rayon, soft Dreamglo cotton or ribbed cotton—and they'll all stand any amount of wearing and washing.

There's a "Looking Glass" just like Alice's in every leading store, Mummy—give your little daughter the thrill of stepping through into Bond's Undieland. Take baby brother along, too. Bond's Undieland has a "Cumfy" vest just made for baby. Bond's "Cumfy" Vest grows with baby because it's made with the added length. And that Tru-Size label on *all* Bond's Vests is your guarantee of perfect fit and spells loveliness for children of all ages and sizes.

Remember the Looking Glass and what he said to Alice. He's talking to you, too!

"Come in, little ones," the Looking Glass is saying. "Come and get some BOND'S Underlovelies for your very own!"

BOND'S

Tru-size underlovelies for children—
all with plenty of wear for growing up

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Australian Fashions

The Slim Line

The six models on this page were chosen as ideal garments in any wardrobe. They can be worn for a number of different occasions, and each provides a perfect "basic" for summer.

● Mauveshel linen dressmaker suit. Skirt has button interest. XSSW to XOS fitting. By House of Fashion. Priced about £7/11/-.

● French shantung tailored suit, above, with white trimming on the collar and on the pockets. Frock features sheathlike skirt. XSSW to XOS in fitting. By House of Fashion. Priced about £10.

● Tailored frock with white pique collar and side pockets, at left. The little jacket has interesting new button detail. XSSW to SW fitting. By A. L. George. Priced about £11/19/6.

● Shantung frock, with collar interest of double flaps, below, has centre buttoning and hip pockets. XSSW to W fitting. A. L. George. Priced about £10/8/6. Hats by N. E. Sheppard & Company.

● Dressy crepe suit, above, has popular magyar sleeve and features white braiding on the hip, basque, and collar. XSSW to XOS fitting. By Ridley Robes. Priced about £16/9/6.

● Charming cotton frock, left, has sloping hip pockets trimmed with organdie. The little organdie blouse is separate. XSSW to XW fitting. By Ridley Robes. Priced about £7/9/6.

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After Five

● The right frock for after-five wear varies according to the occasion, but here are four summer styles which should suit your every invitation this summer. The three short-length frocks give a perfect illusion of slimness and grace to the larger figure, and the cotton evening gown is practical, as well as being high fashion.

● Ideal for summer dancing is this cool, floral cotton frock, below, in pink and green tonings, with full skirt. Also available in other shades, XSSW to SW fittings. By The Hedley James Signature McGinley and Carpenter. Priced about £13/11/3.

● Gold crepe suit with very new short sleeve, soft clover leaf design of silk cording on the jacket and a gored skirt, above left. The suit is obtainable in all pastel shades, up to XW fitting. By Millerson Models. Priced about £11/5/-.

● Elegant frock for the larger figure, above, has a bunch of delicate spring lilac nestling in the white pique horseshoe neckline. The skirt is cone-pleated. In all shades, by Ecstasy. Priced about £16/10/6.

● Becoming to big fittings, the very new apron front is used in this pleated dress. The skirt, which is separate, can be buttoned on. Available in most shades in crepe, the dress has a slashed neckline in front. By Ecstasy. Priced about £16/9/6.

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Australian Fashions

For Sultry Days

● A Grafton anti-shrink frock, centre left, in floral with diagonal buttoning and skirt featuring fashionable big flap pockets, following collar line. SSW to SX in fitting. By Adelyn. Priced about £4/15/-.

● A shirtmaker frock of washable non-drop silk jersey, tied at waist, left, is made on simple lines in a tropical butterfly design. XSSW to W in fitting. By Bookalil. Priced about £4/9/6.

● Cotton coinspot with an attractive neckline trimmed with white cotton lace. Frock may be worn on or off the shoulder. It is gathered into a full skirt. Up to SW in size. By Cole of California. Priced about £4/4/-

● Unusual linen frock with an attractive double pique collar, pockets pique edged, above, has a striped tie of silk. Made in many colors. By Fashion Pfeiffer. Priced about £8/10/6.

● Navy-and-white check silk jersey with pleated skirt, above, is made in shirtmaker style with three-quarter sleeve gathering into a band. Frock has full skirt with side pockets. By Lucas. Priced about £4/19/10.

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Summe

● Shirtmaker frock of non-drop Tiennyson silk jersey with unpressed pleated skirt. Dress is obtainable in different colored stripes on a white background. Manufactured by Ecstasy. Priced about £7/16/9.

● Right: Shantung, popular fabric of the season, is shown here in a two-tone frock featuring rounded shoulders and high pointed collar, and the bodice is buttoned down the front. In many new color combinations. By Fashion Pfeiffer. Priced about £8/10/6.

● Shirt-frock in crepe, below, flattering to bigger figures, has rounded shoulders and is finished with hand roulet work. The skirt is gored, with unpressed pleats in the front. By Millerson Models. Priced about £11/15/-.

★ This attractive collection of all-purpose
manufacturers and may be purchased
cottons are colorful and gay for beach we
frocks ideal for warm summer nights,
washable jersey or shantung appropria

● Tailored two-piece suit of fashionable Moygashel linen. The three attractive straw buttons were first introduced to Australia by Mary Hordern in our Paris Fashion Parades. Suit by Hattie Hague. Priced about £8/0/4.

● Enchanting evening gown of shot taffeta with panels on very full skirt. Selling in various color combinations of blue, green, and gold. Sizes XSSW to XW. By The Hedley James Signature McGinley and Carpenter. Priced about £18/1/3.

● Delightful cot
gown has the
shouldered effect.
pique collar is t
lace. The frock
fitting bodice wit
pleat on the gra
Ecstasy. Priced ab

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er Successes

se frocks has been chosen from leading
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priate for a luncheon date in town.

otton evening
e new one-
t. The white
trimmed with
has a form-
th a full flat
ceful skirt. By
about £4/9/11.

● Black shantung, which is tops this season, is shown here to advantage in a sheath cocktail frock embroidered in black. Worn with white leather belt. Also in pastel shades. In all fittings. By Fashion Pfeiffer. Priced about £8/19/6.

● An inexpensive bolero frock, right, in floral stripes, with tie straps, fitting bodice, and very full gathered skirt. For holidays. It is obtainable in different colors up to W fitting. By Bookallil. Priced about £2/17/6.

● Nothing could be cooler than the striped cotton dress at the left, with its new cutaway sleeve and delicate bows on the shoulders. The full skirt has fashionable large pockets. By Chelsea Styles Pty. Ltd. Priced about £5/2/2.

● Smart little coin-spotted frock made on simple but up-to-date lines in red, tan, grey, blue, and green. By Bookallil. Priced about £1/9/11. Color photographs of Australian fashions by staff photographer Bob Cleland.

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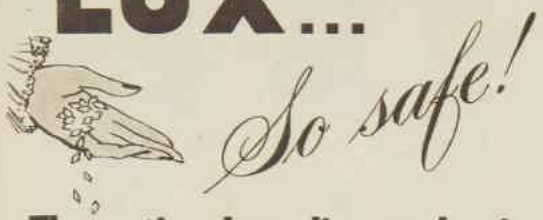
LUX...



Those tiny Lux diamonds give such fast, gentle suds... keep blankets soft and fluffy so much longer

SPRINGTIME is Luxtime for those friendly winter blankets! Strong soaps or harsh and careless washing could so easily leave them matted and discoloured. But you'll guard their snowy softness . . . keep them winter-warm for years . . . if you launder them the *gentle* way — in Lux. Lux is just as safe for blankets as it is for all your woollens.

Keep your hands soft and petal-smooth. Lux care is gentler.

U.119.WW142g

A Town Like Alice

Continued from page 7

JEAN had not long to wait before the ringers found her; they came one by one, diffidently, unsure of themselves before this English girl, and yet unable to keep away. She had a little circle of them squatting with her on the verandah presently.

She got them to talk about themselves; it seemed the best way to put them at their ease.

"It's all right here," said one. "It's good cattle country; more rain here than what you get down further south. But I'm off out of it next year. My brother, he's down at Rockhampton working on the railway. He said he'd get me in the gang if I went down."

Jean asked, "Is it better pay down there?"

"Well, no. I don't think it's so good. Trouble is this place. There's nothing to do here."

"Do you get a cinema here ever?"

"There's a chap supposed to come here every fortnight and show films in the shire hall—that building over there." She saw a low, barn-like wooden structure. "He hasn't been for a month, but he's coming next week, Mr. Carter says."

"What about dances?" Jean asked.

There was a cynical laugh. "They try it sometimes, but it's a crook place for a dance. Not enough girls."

Pete Fletcher said, "There's about fifty of us stockriders come in to Willstown, Miss Paget, and there's two unmarried girls to dance with, Doris Nash and Susie Anderson."

Jean asked, "But what happens to all the girls? There must be more than that round here?"

"They all go to the cities for a job," said somebody. "There's nothing for a girl to do in Willstown. They go to Townsville and Rockhampton—Brisbane, too."

Pete Fletcher said, "That's where I'm going, Brisbane."

Jean said, "Don't you like it on a cattle station, then?" She was thinking of Joe Harman and his love for the outback.

"Oh, the station's all right," said Pete. "But a fellow's got a right to have a girl and marry."

Somebody else explained to her, "You see, Miss Paget, if a girl's got her head screwed on right—say, like it might be you—you wouldn't stay here. You'd be off to some place where you could get a job."

"Who's going to run the stations if you all go down to the cities, looking round a bit?" Jean said.

"That's the manager's headache," said Pete.

Jean continued for the next two days in Willstown, sitting on the verandah and talking to the ringers, and visiting the various establishments in the town.

Miss Kenroy took her and showed her the school. Sister Douglas showed her the hospital. Mr. Carter showed her the shire hall with the pathetically few books that constituted the public library; Mr. Watkins showed her the bank, which was full of flies, and Sergeant Haines showed her the police station.

By the end of the week she was beginning to know a good deal about Willstown.

Jim Lennon came in to town on Saturday, as predicted, in a utility that Jean learned was the property of Joe Harman. Mr. Lennon was a lean, bronzed, taciturn man.

"I got an airmail letter yesterday," he said with the deliberation of the Queenslander. "Joe's starting on his way back from England in a ship. He said he'd be here about the middle of October."

"What's Joe been doing in England, Mr. Lennon? Did he tell you what he was going for?"

The stockrider laughed. "I didn't even know he was going. All I knew was he was going down to Brisbane. Then I got a letter that he'd gone to England. I don't know why he went. He did say in this letter I got yesterday he'd seen a bonza herd of Herefords, belonging to a Sir Dennis Frampton. Maybe he's having bulls shipped out to raise the quality of the stock. He didn't tell me nothing."

She gave him the address where she intended to stay in Cairns, and asked him to let her know when he got accurate news of Joe's arrival.

That evening as she was sitting in her deck chair on the veradah, Al Burns brought a bashful, bearded old man to her; he had disengaged the old man from the bar with some difficulty. He was carrying a sack.

"Miss Paget," he said, "want you to meet Jeff Pocock." Jean got up and shook hands. "Thought you'd like to meet Jeff," Al said cheerfully. "Jeff's the best alligator hunter in all Queensland. He's got an alligator skin to show you, Miss Paget." To the old man he said, "Show her your skin, Jeff. I bet she's never seen a skin like that in England."

Jeff Pocock took the sack and opened it, and took out a small alligator skin rolled up.

"Course," he said, "I cleaned and trimmed and tanned this one myself. Mostly we just salt them and sell 'em to the tannery like that." He unrolled the skin before her on the floor of the verandah. "Pretty markings, ain't they? I bet you never seen a skin like that in England."

The sight of it brought back nostalgic memories to Jean of her job in London and rows of girls sitting at the work benches making up alligator skin shoes and handbags and dressing-cases. She laughed.

"I've seen hundreds of them in England," she replied. "This is one thing I really know about. I used to work in a factory that made these skins up into handbags and dressing-cases." She picked up the skin and handled it. "Ours were harder than this, I think. You've done the curing very well, Jeff."

SEVERAL other men had drifted up. Jean's story was repeated back and forth in other words, and she told them all about Pack and Levy Ltd. They were very interested; none of them knew much about the skins after they had left the Gulf country.

"I know they make shoes of them," said Jeff. "I never see a pair."

A vague idea was forming in Jean's mind. "How many of these do you get a year?" she asked.

"I turned in eighty-two last year," the old man said. "'Course that's a little 'un. They mostly run about thirty to thirty-six inch—width of skin, that is. That's a 'gator about eleven foot long."

Jean said, "Will you sell me this one, Jeff?"

"What do you want it for?"

She laughed. "I want to make myself a pair of shoes out of it." She paused. "That's if Tim Whelan can make up a pair of lasts for me."

He looked embarrassed. "I don't want nothing for it," he said gruffly. "I'll give it to you."

She argued with him for a little while, and then accepted gracefully.

"We'll want a bit of calf skin for the soles," she said, "and some thicker stuff for building up the heels."

Jean made that pair of shoes working upon the dresisng-table of her bedroom; to be more exact, she made three pairs before she got a pair that she could wear.

She started off upon Tim Whelan. Tim had made lasts for shoes from time to time, working for various cobblers; the outback woodworker must turn his hand to anything.

Please turn to page 48

Interesting People

MR. GEOK-KEE YEAP

. . . East and West

CHINESE student of architecture Geok-Kee Yeap, president of the newly formed Sydney University Chinese Students' Society, is anxious for goodwill and co-operation between Australians and Chinese. Came from Penang, Malaya, three years ago, not realising there would be more than 60 Chinese students at University. Interested in drama, sketching, and music. Will practise architecture in Penang, hopes to organise drama groups and musicales in own country.

MISS PHILIPPA NIALL

. . . advises on books

TRAINED librarian and Bachelor of Arts, pretty Philippa Niall is one of very few women to have job of readers' adviser in public libraries in Australia. Attached to Melbourne Public Lending Library, where she annotates recent books, suggests reading lists, and changes books for city and country readers. Originally planned to study chemistry, but changed her mind and trained at the Public Library School at night while doing her Arts course at University of Melbourne.

MR. TOM COLE

. . . big game hunter

NORTHERN TERRITORY was home of cattle station owner and big game hunter Tom Cole for over 17 years. Now lives in Sydney, but recently returned from successful crocodile-hunting trip in far north. Says shooting crocs. is as easy as picking strawberries. Hunts them at night in canoe with flashlamp, shoots at 10 feet. Buffalo hunting is hardest, he says. Spent 10 years shooting buffaloes at Kapalga, in Northern Territory. Shoots duck and quail for fun, likes quiet game of golf and bit of gardening.

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Hello, handsome!

Our Jantzen shorts will look grand on the man in your life. He'll feel grand in them too . . . Comfort. Snug fit. Action free! Even if he's lazy with his waistline we'll streamline him. Super fabrics. Jantzen's perfect, permanent fit every stitch of the way.

SHE is wearing "Crazy Stripe" in figure-flattering Velvasheen. Two other Glorious Prints.

HE is holding "Surfrider" trunks of stout-hearted Nylosheen. 7 colors.

Jantzen

Obtainable only at Retail Stores

'High Waist' wool trunks. Choose from 7 colors.

'Pacer' Walk Shorts of super quality gaberdine. 7 colors.

'Trimmer' action-designed Satin-sleeks. 6 colors.

'Coxswain' of quick-drying cotton Gaberdine. 5 colors.

'New Olympic' of Water-repellent Velan Rayon. 6 colors.

'Sporter' boxer, Water-repellent 'Bengaline' Fabric. 6 colors.

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Crisply styled in striking summer prints. Restell brings you new lines, new fashion smartness in this season's outstanding fashion range.
Now on display at your favourite store.

YOU LOOK SO WELL IN

Restell

A Town Like Alice

Continued from page 46

JEAN lent Tim one of her shoes to measure in his carpenter's shop, and he made a pair of lasts for her in mulga wood in a couple of days. She asked Pete Fletcher about leather for the soles and heels, and he produced some pieces of tanned cowskin which were about the right thickness for the soles, and a piece of bull's skin for building up the heels.

The lining was a major difficulty at first till somebody suggested a young wallaby skin. Pete Fletcher went out and shot the wallaby and skinned it, and the tanning was carried out by a committee of Pete Fletcher and Al Burns and Don Duncan, working in the back of Bill Duncan's store.

The business of this pair of shoes assumed such an importance in the life of Willstown that Jean put off her trip to Cairns for a week, and then another week.

The first pair of shoes were terrible. They pinched her toes and the heels were too large by a quarter of an inch, and they hurt her instep. The lining was not a success, and the whole job was messy with the steaming perspiration of her fingers. Still, they were shoes, and wearable by anyone whose feet happened to be that shape.

She could not show shoes like that to the men downstairs, and so she set to work to make another pair. She got Tim to alter the lasts for her, bought another knife and a small carborundum stone from the store, and started again.

In all this work, Annie took a great interest. She used to come and sit and watch Jean working as she trimmed and filed the soles or stretched the wet alligator hides carefully upon the lasts.

"I do think you're clever to be able to do that," she said. "They're almost as good as you could buy in a shop."

The second pair were better. They fitted Jean moderately well, but the wallaby skin lining was uneven and lumpy, and the whole job was still messy and finger marked with sweat. Undaunted, she began a third pair.

This time she used portions of the wallaby skin that were of even thickness, having no means of trimming the skin down, and when it came to the final assembly of the shoes she worked in the early morning when the perspiration of her hands was least.

The final result was quite a creditable shoe with rather an ugly colored lining, but a shoe that she could have worn anywhere.

She took the three pairs downstairs and showed them to Al Burns on the verandah; Al fetched two or three of the other men, and Mrs. Connor came to look at them.

"That's what happens to the alligator skins in England," Jean said.

One of the men said, "You made them yourself, Miss Paget?"

She laughed. "Ask Mrs. Connor. She knows the mess I've been making in the bedroom."

The man turned the shoe over in his hand. "It's as good as you'd buy in a shop," he said slowly.

Jean shook her head. "It's not," she said. "It's not really." She pointed out the defects to him. "I haven't got the proper brads or the proper fixative. And the whole thing's messy, too. I just made it up to show you what they do with all these skins that Jeff brings in."

"I bet you could sell that in Cairns," the man said stubbornly. "My word, you could."

Sam Small said, "How much does a pair of shoes like that cost in England?"

"In a shop?" She thought for a minute. "About four pounds fifteen shillings, I should say. Of course, you can pay much more than that for a really good shoe. People pay up to ten pounds in some shops."

"Ten pounds for a pair of shoes like that?"

Jeff was out of town up the river visiting his traps, so she could not show him the shoes that day. She left them with the men to take into the bar and talk over, and she went to have a hot bath. The hotel had a cold shower for women, but Annie had shown her how to have a hot bath in Willstown.

Where the water from the bore ran off in a hot stream, a small wooden hut had been constructed, spanning the stream, at such a distance from the bore that the temperature was just right for a bath.

A rough concrete pool had been constructed here large enough for two bodies to lie in side by side; you took your towel and soap and went to the hut and locked yourself in and bathed in the warm, saline water flowing through the pool. The salts in the water made this bath unusually refreshing.

Jean lay in the warm water, locked in the little hut, thinking deeply.

From the time she had first learned of her inheritance she had been puzzled, and at times distressed, by the problem of what she was going to do with her life.

She was a business girl, accustomed to industry.

Subconsciously she had been searching, questioning, for the past six months, to find something that she could work at. The only work she really knew about was fancy leather goods, alligator shoes and handbags and attache cases.

As she lay in the warm, medicated water, a plan was forming in Jean's mind. Suppose she had a little workshop with about five girls in it, and a small tannery outside. Two hand presses and a rotary polisher.

That meant a supply of electric current. A small motor generator set, unless perhaps she could buy current from the hotel. An air conditioner to keep the workshop cool and keep the girls' hands from sweating as they worked. It was imperative that the finished shoes should be virgin clean.

WAS it possible for such a set-up to pay? Jean lay calculating in her bath. She had discovered that Jeff Pocock got about seventy shillings for an average alligator skin, uncured. She knew that Pack and Levy paid about a hundred and eighty shillings for cured skins.

It did not seem to her that it could cost more than twenty shillings to trim and tan an alligator skin, and her figures were in Australian money, too. The skins should be much cheaper than in England.

But the major problem was not the business, she thought. In Willstown both labor and materials were cheap; the business end of it might well be all right. But could she train the sort of girl that she could get in Willstown to turn out first-class quality work, capable of being sold in Bond Street shops? That was the real problem.

She lay for a long time in her bath, thinking very deeply.

That evening as she was sitting in her deck chair on the verandah, Sam Small came to her. "Miss Paget," he said. "Mind if we have a talk?"

"Of course, Sam," she said.

"I been thinking about that pair of shoes you made," he said. "I been wondering if you could teach our Judy."

"How old is Judy, Sam?"

"Fifteen," he said. "Sixteen next November."

"Do you want her to learn shoemaking?" Jean asked.

Please turn to page 59

The Lady Daphne Straight, charming English peeress says, "Pond's Dry Skin Cream is really remarkable—so very rich and soft, yet never sticky."

If you are over 25
Beware of
DRY SKIN

From about 25 on the natural oil that keeps skin soft gradually decreases. Even before 40 — a woman may lose as much as 20% of this oil skin needs.

Replacement help is at your fingertips with *new* Pond's Dry Skin Cream! Three features make this new cream extra softening: 1. It is *rich in lanolin*, most like skin's own oil. 2. It is *homogenized* to soak in better. 3. It has a *special emulsifier*.

Arrests Dry Skin two ways

Lanolin-Softens by Night — Work plenty of Pond's new Dry Skin Cream over face, throat. Leave 5 to 15 minutes, or *all night* for extra softening.

Lanolin-Protects by Day — Pond's *new* Dry Skin Cream used lightly before make-up protects skin against dryness all day.

Get your big economy jar of Pond's Dry Skin Cream *to-day!* 4/3 at chemists and leading stores.

PSO-3

Covering the wound isn't enough! Infection starts right under that skin break. Why give it a chance? Apply Rexona Ointment generously to your usual dry dressing. Rexona goes deep and heals quickly at the point where infection starts.

* *A handy, small jar of Rexona Ointment is an absolute necessity in every bathroom cupboard.*

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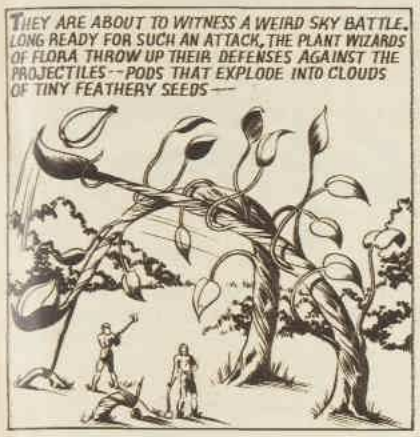
Mandrake the Magician

MANDRAKE: Master magician, and
LOTHAR: His giant Nubian servant, with lovely
PRINCESS NARDA: Meet
TOR: King of Mechana, who loves
DR. FLOREL: Ruler of Flora. As Flora and Mechana have fought for centuries, Tor has admired Dr. Florel's photograph, but has never met her. Narda suggests that they go to Flora and explain their mission. Florian guards shoot down the aircraft, and in revenge Tor launches flying bombs. NOW READ ON.



BEWARE OF "HUNGRY HAIR"

Replace those natural oils which sun, wind and water dry from your scalp . . .

Are you one of the "No Hat" brigade? Remember, your hair gets hungry in this climate. Hungry, dull and brittle if you don't watch out! Just a few drops of "Vaseline" Hair Tonic every morning supplements the natural scalp oils and helps you guard against dry scalp and lifeless "HUNGRY HAIR".

"Vaseline" Hair Tonic helps clear away loose dandruff and leaves your hair well-groomed, attractive and protected all day. Give your hair this special care. Ask for "Vaseline" Hair Tonic. Your hair looks *better*, your scalp *feels* better.

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TRADE MARK
Double care — both Scalp and Hair

"Vaseline" is the Registered Trade Mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co. Cons'd.

HT 2

Indigestion — what to do?

Things are grim when you get an attack of indigestion and can't do anything about it. But why be caught in this predicament — pleasant-tasting Digestif Rennies banish the pain in *seconds!* Easy to take anywhere, any time. Just suck two Rennies—this scientific combination of five ingredients neutralises the excess acid, restores normal digestion. Carry a few with you and be sure.

1/3 and 1/- packet

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—individually wrapped—easy to carry

DR 26.10

NEW! ...a cream deodorant

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1. Does not rot dresses or men's shirts. Does not irritate skin.
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As I Read the STARS

By WYNNE TURNER

ARIES (March 21 to April 20): A tricky week for shared interests. Partnerships and personal contacts may not proceed smoothly over the next few days. Try to keep personal affairs balanced until after October 3, and avoid hasty decisions.

TAURUS (April 21 to May 21): An inclination to overdo things this week could affect health and disrupt work. Avoid extremes and mishaps and be tactful with employees or employers on Friday. Keep a tight rein on your temper.

GEMINI (May 22 to June 21): From September 29 to October 3 aspects are adverse for love, friendships, speculation, and games of chance. Avoid taking risks and don't overdo pleasures.

CANCER (June 22 to July 23): Domestic affairs may seem monotonous and irksome near the week-end. Don't act on impulse or make any radical change until after October 3. Do not give way to natural urge for quick action.

LEO (July 24 to August 23): Use patience and tact with others, especially neighbors, relatives, teachers, and friends. Don't let delays or disappointments during the next few days hurry you into unwise action early next week.

VIRGO (August 24 to September 23): A difficult week where finance, health, and business deals are concerned. Sit tight for a while. Your chance comes soon and it may be worth waiting for.

LIBRA (September 24 to October 23): Don't let setbacks daunt you this week. Personal affairs could be difficult, especially on September 29 and October 3, but you will be in the clear soon.

SCORPIO (October 24 to November 22): A week when hindrances and delays may occur. It is better suited to quiet routine than to new projects. Let others share your problems and help you.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 to December 22): Not your most dependable week, especially from September 29 onwards. Friends could disappoint or a wish fall through. Don't allow differences of opinion to break ties.

CAPRICORN (December 23 to January 20): Delay may frustrate some of your plans on Friday, although for matters needing sustained effort it can be considered a good day. Avoid conflicts on October 3.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19): A feeling of restlessness may prevail this week, with a desire to start new ventures, but beware, as most activities have a catch in them just now. Avoid travel, law, and official dealings.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20): Obstacles and upsets may have to be overcome this week. Guard against losses and risks. You are in a cycle when most affairs reach a natural end. Go warily until after October 3.

[The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatsoever for the statements contained in it.]

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KAYSER

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. . . and here's the newest Lingerie Fashion note — a spray of roses (detachable) is placed centre front on the loveliest dreamgown ever — **KAYSER 'Rosegown'**

BE WISER — BUY KAYSER

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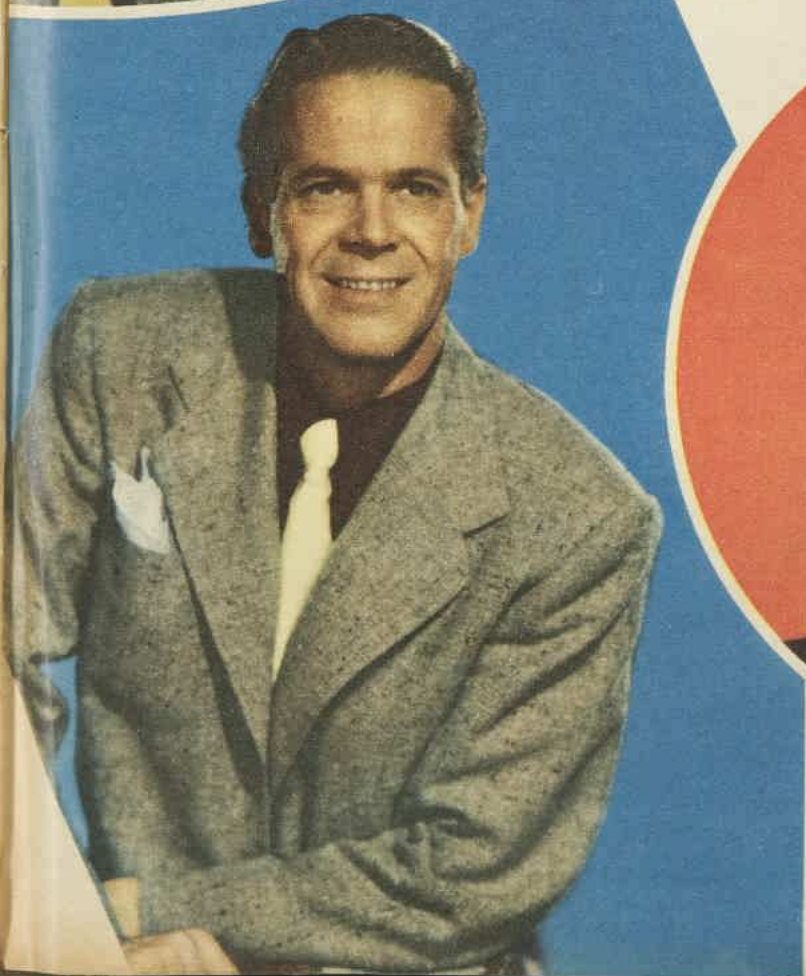
Rugged, romantic star quartet

• *ZACHARY SCOTT (above left) appears in R.K.O.'s "Born To Be Bad," co - starring with Joan Fontaine.*

• *DON DEFORE (right) is in Paramount's gambling story "Dark City" with Wendell Corey and Lizabeth Scott.*



• *DAN DURYEA (left) smiles seldom in the role of a trigger-happy Western badman in "Winchester 73," in which James Stewart plays the lead.*

• *RICARDO MONTALBAN (above) takes a fling at crime detection in "Mystery Street" for M.G.M., with the help of Jan Sterling and star cast.*

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Ingola WOOL & COTTON *Fabric*

INGOLA FABRIC IS FAMOUS . . . *Ask for it at all stores*

1 ORDERS are issued by Elder Jonathan Wiggs (Ward Bond) to small party of Mormons bound for distant and almost unexplored San Juan River region. He knows they cannot reach spot without guide.

2 GUIDES Travis (Ben Johnson) and Sandy (Harry Carey, jun.) sell Mormons string of mounts, are hired to lead party with Travis as waggonmaster.

3 STRANDED on way westward, show caravan includes "Doctor" Hall (Alan Mowbray), Florie (Ruth Clifford), and dancer Denver (Joanne Dru). They join the party.

4 HOLD-UP by Uncle Shiloh Clegg (Charles Kemper) and outlaw band is followed by their decision to remain until it's safe to leave. Sandy wants to fight but Travis restrains him.

WESTERN ACTION STORY

Wagonmaster

JOHN FORD'S spectacular Western melodrama is based upon a heroic Mormon expedition in the 1879 period of Utah development, and comes as successor to his "Fort Apache" and "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon."

The hardships of a band of pioneers facing a baffling terrain and beset by bandits and unfriendly Navajos is relieved with some deftly applied episodes of humor, dancing, and song.

Ben Johnson, who has doubled in action sequences for numerous male stars of the screen, is raised to star ranking in this film. A rodeo contestant since he was 16 years old, Johnson last year won a big calf-roping contest at the Pendleton, Oregon, Round-up.

Filmed mainly on location in rugged Utah, awe-inspiring background scenery accents the realism of this R.K.O. production.

5 ENCOUNTER with Navajos looks serious when outlaw attacks Indian girl. Tribe is placated when offender is whipped, but Cleggs bide time.

6 ROMANCE of Travis and fiery Denver finally settles down after party fords perilous Colorado River.

7 PEACEFUL camp is shattered when Uncle Shiloh shoots unarmed driver of grain waggon. To save pretty Mormon girl Prudence Perkins (Kathleen O'Malley), Sandy opens fire.

8 BATTLE develops in which outlaw band is wiped out. Continuing its long journey, the waggon-train safely negotiates dangerous passage down the valley, its great adventure finished.

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"BLUSH-CLEANSE" tonight!

Mrs. Astor uses her Pond's Cold Cream the "blush-cleanse" way. Her skin has the clean, smooth look of faultless grooming.

You'll see a lovely difference in your face instantly — when you "blush-cleanse" with silky soft Pond's Cold Cream. The special demulcent action of Pond's Cold Cream helps free your skin from beauty-clouding dirt. And the Pond's "blush-cleanse" wakes up the circulation that is so *good* for the skin. It stirs your whole face awake. It sets roses blooming in your cheeks . . . gives your skin a wonderful clean-fresh feeling!

How to "Blush-cleanse"

1. **Rouse** your face with warm water. Dip deep into Pond's Cold Cream and swirl it in soft, creamy circles up over your face and throat. Tissue off.
2. **Blush-rinse.** Cream again with snowy soft Pond's Cold Cream. Swirl about 25 more creamy circles over your face. Tissue well.
3. **Tingle** your face with a splash of cold water. Blot dry.

See your new face! It's radiant! It feels like smooth velvet! Your cheeks full of pink roses! So every night — this complete "blush-cleansing". Every morning — for a bright-awake look — a once over "blush-cleansing" with your Pond's.

Mrs. Ellen Tuck Astor

Beautiful American Society Leader

Startlingly lovely against her auburn hair is Mrs. Ellen Tuck Astor's exquisite skin, smooth and creamy-white as a gardenia petal . . . a lovely result of lovely care. Like many distinguished young social favourites, this always beautifully groomed socialite uses her Pond's Cold Cream the "blush-cleanse" way.

"This Pond's way of caring for my skin is a joy," Mrs. Astor says. "It leaves my face meticulously clean, so refreshed, and brings up color in my cheeks."

POND'S COLD CREAM

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WASHABLE, LONG-WEARING
'Celanese'
CREPE-DE-CHENE

Yes, it's undoubtedly a Tailor Maid if you're looking for a blouse distinguished by the interplay of frothy lace and streamlined pintucks. It's a Tailor Maid too, if you want smooth tailoring and immaculate finish — and naturally, it's a Tailor Maid if you want a fabric good looking, long wearing, easy to wash and quick to dry. 'Celanese' famous fabric is all these things, and in Tailor Maids you'll find it in white and in pretty pastels.

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Eat well, look younger, says dietitian

● Would you like to live to celebrate 100 birthdays if you could be sure of possessing a sound, healthy body and attractive and vital face, and of still being useful in the world?

A RADIANT COMPLEXION is an internal-external affair. By eating so that the blood-stream contains all the elements needed to nourish the skin the first requisite is achieved. Constant and effective habits of caring for the complexion come next.

IN his latest book, "Look Younger, Live Longer," Gaylord Hauser, whose work as a dietitian, lecturer, and author has won him an international reputation, discusses this possibility.

Hauser says that by eating for health, good looks, youth, vitality, and the joy of living, instead of merely to satisfy hunger, we would not be old at 40, 60, or even 80 or 90.

The author reiterates that ingredients for beauty, as well as health, lie immediately under the skin of the potato and in the peelings often scraped off the carrot.

It is more than 10 years since handsome, Swiss-born Dr. Hauser first began to attract attention by presenting his beauty-through-diet theories throughout America.

He had gone there as a sick young man in search of health through surgery, but discovered it instead through diet. He then made dietetics his career.

It did not take long to build up a big following among food-conscious Americans.

Hauser reached the pinnacle of his career when he set up student classes in Hollywood.

Greta Garbo, then in her heyday, became a student, and he prescribed a diet for her when she wanted to gain weight.

Garbo, who had always taken a keen interest in diet as an aid to health, was delighted with the effect of the raw fruits and vegetables prescribed for her, and said so in nation-wide publicity statements.

In this book, "Look Younger, Live Longer," Dr. Hauser says the way you look, feel, think, hope, believe, and act depends upon three things—good food, a strong vibrant body, and an adventurous spirit.

It is better to under-eat than to over-eat, and the supreme gift is that of complete body relaxation.

"I believe that the ideal diet contains plenty of protein (milk, eggs, lean meat, lean fish, fresh cheese), plenty of fresh green and yellow vegetables, and vegetable juices, fruit, fruit juices, and 100 per cent. whole grain cereals and flour," he says.

"I believe, also, that everyone over 40 should supplement the diet with daily requirements of vitamins and minerals. Do not try to substitute vitamin pills for food vitamins. Without a sound basic diet, vitamin and mineral pills can do you no good."

Gaylord Hauser recommends eating and enjoying all kinds of good food, either fresh or cooked (never overcooked).

He says to add to the flavor of meats and sauces with herbs and mild spices, as the French do.

Consider a large, crisp salad as an important part of the main meal, and eat it as the first course, when appetite is keenest. Fruit should become the favorite dessert, either fresh or stewed, in the modern manner, with honey.

Hauser recommends daily use of powdered brewers' yeast, powdered skim milk, wheat germ, and blackstrap molasses for the health-giving substances each contains.

If you are looking for a way to make up for dietetic and other carelessness, such as lack of sleep, lack of relaxation, because sooner or later all our extravagances leave imprints upon our bodies and faces, a one-day rest cure will help.

Declare one day of every week a health holiday, to be devoted to the Look Younger, Live Longer objective.

After a day of rest both body and spirit are lighter and brighter, and for that reason yearly holidays have become a national good habit; but two weeks, or even three or four every year, are not enough in these days of high-tension living. Why wait for exhaustion to catch up with you?

By CAROLYN EARLE,
Our Beauty Expert

Make a rest day any day of the week, or Sunday, if that is your only day away from the job, but go all the way. Not only does the brain need a rest, but the entire body needs a rest.

Especially the inner man needs a holiday from overeating.

Be as lazy as possible, stay in bed as long as you like, shut off the telephone, and talk as little as you can.

In other words—relax, let go of all tension.

The simplest and most effective way to relax the entire body is in the body-slant position, with the head lower than the feet.

One way to do this, if you are not too tall, is to lie on your ironing board, with one end of the board on the floor, and the other end propped up with a low stool or chair.

The best way is to get a board one foot and a half wide, and a little longer than yourself and, if possible, have a carpenter install it in a permanent place. The raised end should be not more than 12 or 15 inches high.

In the body slant position the spine straightens out and the back flattens itself. Muscles which ordinarily are somewhat tensed, even in easy standing or sitting, are now relaxed and at ease.

Feet and legs are released from strain, abdominal muscles get a lift, and the blood flows more freely to the muscles of the chin, throat, and cheeks, maintaining their firmness.

The complexion, hair, and scalp, too, benefit from this increased blood circulation.

Take the body slant two or three times during your rest day. Be alone, just lie there in your room, and rest weary bones.

At the same time, you might as well use one of the simplest and most wonderful forces to rejuvenate the body—breathe, slowly and gently, in through your nose, then slowly, and a little more forcefully, breathe out through the mouth.

Do this for three minutes three times a day or whenever you are relaxing.

Your menu for your eating holiday should be light to give an overworked digestive tract a rest. Emphasise vitamin and mineral rich, easily digestible foods, and eat little of the indigestible and fattening food for this one day.

Menus may be chosen from fresh fruits, fruit juices, fresh vegetables, salads, mixed fruit and vegetable juices, cottage cheese, buttermilk, molasses, and honey.

Hot beverages include fortified milk, coffee, and New Orleans cup.

Fortified milk and milk drinks may be made by adding a half-cup of powdered skim milk by degrees to four cups of fresh milk and mixing thoroughly. Honey or molasses may be added. For New Orleans cup, beat two teaspoons of blackstrap molasses into one cup of scalding water, add a pinch of vegetable salt, and flavor with fresh milk.

("Look Younger, Live Longer," by Gaylord Hauser, is published by Farrar, Strauss & Company, New York.)

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Of course she is!

She's full of confidence because she can rely on boundless energy that springs from radiant health that enables her always to look her best. No constipation, sick headaches for her. She prevents these everyday ills by taking Beecham's Pills whenever she needs a reliable and effective laxative

Box of 40 pills, 1/3; 120 pills, 3/-.

Wise woman—she takes

Beecham's Pills
WORTH A GUINEA A BOX

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PATTY

RALLY

We do admire..

. . . that washed-clean look the world wears as Spring . . . the shining newness of spotless white . . . all-white jackets, coats, dresses. Joining in the all-white theme is Bedggood's "Patty" in buckskin with leather heel.

We're delighted with the special place checks have won. Small checks for preference—but checks you must have — in a suit, a dress, a coat or simply a skirt . . . and there's "Rally" by Bedggood to support your choice.

TAREE

SUNNY TANGO

We're thrilled with the clever use of crisp white collars and cuffs. We love the way they're worn with feather-weight navy wool frocks, with matching white hat and gloves . . . and Bedggood's "Sunny Tango". We like, too, the silhouette that links a slim skirt with a lavishly bloused top. In suits, coats and frocks, fullness tapering to a narrower, shorter skirt makes shoes even more noticeable. "Taree" pairs as companionably with tailleurs as with topcoats. Bedggood's "Suzette" accents the formality of late afternoon and dinner dress.

SUZETTE

Bedggood
ARCHLOCK
THE FRIENDLY FOOTWEAR

1207

★ Bedggood ARCHLOCK Balanced Construction assures correct support plus cushioned ease through every walking hour.

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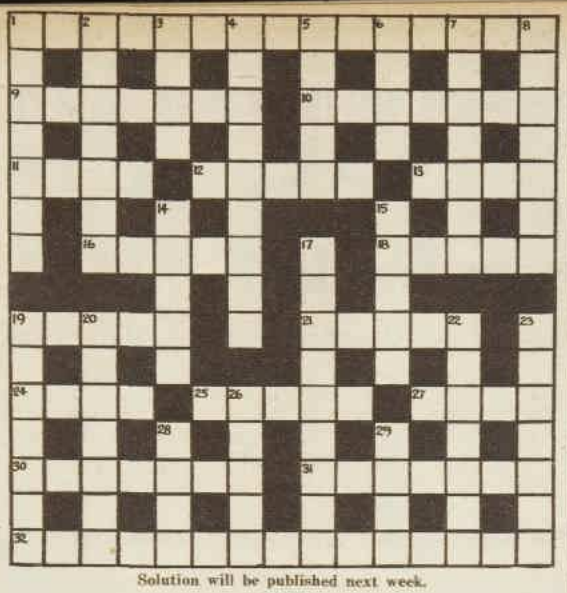
THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. A renewed existence is a recent contract between lessor and lessee of animation (1, 3, 5, 2, 4).
9. Immerse and behold mother in a certificate of degree (7).
10. Fabulous animal of one French, 1 and a grain of cereals (7).
11. Heal foundation of a nobleman (4).
12. Join concerning back a poisonous snake (5).
13. Am in pound an essayist (4).
14. Tear forcibly in French to mature (5).
16. Article and fifty in ease give extreme unction (5).
19. The potato is one that can refute if turned (5).
21. One of Christ's disciples if out come to an end (5).
24. One large, covered vehicle was once terrible in Russia (4).
25. Eskimo hut (5).
27. Talented sailor the French (4).
30. Outshine one hundred lips in ease (7).
31. Yield for Mussolini (7).
32. Try dummies in one (Anag. 5, 2, 3, 5. You may get a fifth columnist.).

Solution to last week's crossword.

S	A	I	L	N	E	A	R	T	H	E	W	I	N	D
T			I		F		U		L		N			E
A	M	P	E	R	S	A	N	D		I	O	N	I	C
R				V		R		O		D		I		R
T	U	L	W	A	R			R	E	E	L	S		E
				N		S		H				F		M
I	N	E	X	A	C	T		O	B	V	I	A	T	E
M		C				A		U				I		N
P	R	O	L	O	N	G		S	I	N	G	L	E	T
L		N				N		E		O				
E		O	M	A	H	A				S	T	R	O	L	L
M		M		S		T		M		H				U
E	M	I	T	S		I	N	E	L	A	S	T	I	C
N		G		E		O		S		L				R
T	O	S	I	T	O	N	T	H	E	E	F	E	N	C	E

Solution will be published next week.

DOWN

1. Join about steamship skill (7).
2. Sovereign of printers' measure by alternative (7).
3. Figure produced by a curve which crosses itself and forms a small body of still water when turned (4).
4. Profligate sailor and a five hundred (9).
5. Bring out when cud is turned in the middle (5).
6. Loud liquid lubricant forms thin sheet of metal (4).
7. I and the sun consumed in place apart (7).
8. Elevate in French man of lofty character (7).
14. Mineral spring about scanty (5).
15. Many make a whole or a strip of leather if turned (5).
17. I am ready in action and you in an improvised musical composition (9).
19. Ancient Greek warship with three banks of oars (7).
20. This writing is read with the fingers (7).
22. Recoil but if rearranged it is a noisily ill-bred person (7).
23. Hinder with an even interior (7).
26. The King starts a color (5).
28. Lively with a bookie on its head (4).
29. Part of a house of one of a Mohammedan race from the wrong end (4).

A Town Like Alice

Continued from page 48

SAM said thoughtfully, "I been thinking that anyone who could make a dinkum pair of ladies' shoes like that, they could sell them in Cairns in the shops. You see, Judy's getting to an age when she's got to do some work, and there ain't nothing here a girl can do to make a living. She'll have to go in to the cities, like the other girls."

He paused, then went on, "That's crook for her mother. We've only got the one girl—three boys and one girl, that's our litter. It'll be a crook deal for her mother if Judy goes to Brisbane, like the other girls. And I thought this shoemaking, well, maybe it would be a thing that she could do at home. After all," he said, "it looks like we've got everything you need to do it with, right here in Willstown."

"Not buckles," Jean said thoughtfully. "We'd have to do something about buckles." She was speaking half to herself.

She thought for a minute. "It wouldn't work like that, Sam," she said. "You think that pair of shoes are wonderful, but they aren't. They're a rotten pair of shoes. You couldn't sell a pair like that in England, not to the sort of people who buy shoes like that. I don't think you could sell them in any first-class shop, even in Cairns."

"They look all right to me," he said stubbornly.

She shook her head. "They aren't. I've been in this business, Sam — I know what a shoe ought to look like. I'm not saying that we can't turn out a decent shoe in Willstown; I'd rather like to try. But to get the job right it'll need machinery, and proper benches and hand tools, and proper materials. I see your point about Judy, and I'd like to see her with a job here in Willstown. But it's too big a thing for her to tackle on her own."

He looked at her keenly. "Was you thinking of a factory or something?"

"I don't know. Suppose somebody started something of the sort here. How many girls would you get to work regular hours, morning and afternoon—say for five pounds a week?"

"Here in Willstown?"

"That's right."

"How young would you let them start?"

She thought for a minute. "When they leave school, I suppose."

He considered the matter. "I think you'd get six or seven round about sixteen or seventeen, Miss Paget. Then there'd be more coming on from school."

She turned to another aspect of the matter. "Sam, what would it cost to put up a hut for a workshop?"

"How big?"

She looked around. "About as long as from here to the end of the verandah, and about half as wide."

"That's thirty foot by fifteen wide. You mean a wooden hut, like it might be an army hut, with an iron roof, and windows all along?"

"That's the sort of thing."

He calculated slowly in his head. "About two hundred pounds."

"I think I'd want it to have a double roof and a verandah, like that house that Sergeant Haines lives in. It's got to be cool."

"Ah, that puts up the cost. A house like that'd cost you close upon four hundred, with a verandah all around."

"How long would that take to build?"

"Oh, I dunno. Have to get the timber up from Normanton. Tim Whelan and his boys'd put that up in a couple of months, I'd say."

There would be extra buildings needed for the tanning and the dyeing of the hides. "Tell me, Sam," she said. "Would people here like something of that sort started? Or would they think it just nonsense?"

He said: "Would they like it! They'd like anything that kept the girls at home, so long as they was happy and got work to do."

They sat in silence for a time. "Takes a bit of thinking about, Sam," she said at last.

When the plane came on Wednesday Jean left Willstown for Cairns. They left in the afternoon and called at various cattle stations with the mail. With the last of the light they put down at Normanton for the night, and drove in to the town in a truck.

The hotel at Normanton was similar to the hotel at Willstown, but rather larger. Jean had tea with the pilot, a man called Mackenzie; after tea she sat with him on the verandah. She asked him if anyone made shoes in Normanton.

"I don't think so," he said. He called out to an acquaintance. "Ted, does anyone make shoes round here?"

"Want to buy some shoes?"

Jean said, "No—I was just curious. They all come from the cities, do they?"

"That's right." Ted rolled himself a cigarette. "My wife's sister, she works in a shoe factory down at Rockhampton. That's where a lot of the shoes come from."

"She's not married?"

"Elsie Peters? No, she's not married."

When he had moved on Jean asked the pilot, "Who was that?"

"Him? Ted Horner. He runs the garage here."

Jean noted the name for future reference.

They flew on to Cairns early the next morning. Jean drove into the town and went to her hotel. Cairns, she found, was a prosperous town of about twenty thousand people, situated rather beautifully on an inlet of the sea. There were several streets of shops, wide avenues with flower-beds down the middle of the road; the buildings were all wood and most had iron roofs.

She wrote to me from there. She had written to me twice from Willstown, and at Cairns she found a letter from me waiting for her that had been there for some days, on account of her delays.

She told me that she had received my letter of the 24th, then said, rather strangely I thought, that she wished she had a typewriter, as this was to be a long letter.

That caused me to look up for a moment, frowning, then I turned to the letter again.

Please turn to page 74

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FINAL INSTALMENT OF OUR THREE-PART SERIAL

ILLUSTRATED BY DUNLOP

Tales of the South Pacific

By JAMES A. MICHENER

BOREDOM turns to rejoicing when the men of a force which has long been stationed on an isolated Pacific island receive the news: "You have been selected to hit the next beachhead!"

Among personalities in the force are ADMIRAL KESTER, brilliant naval strategist, who is to lead the strike; happy-go-lucky TONY FRY, most popular man in the company; DR. BENOWAY; LIEUTENANT BILL HARBISON, who prides himself on his qualities as an officer, but does not scruple to break women's hearts.

Author Michener, who was himself stationed with them, continues his vital, human picture of these men as they await the time of the strike.

PASSION

DR. PAUL BENOWAY, of LARU-8, finally recovered from the exposure he suffered during the days and nights he spent on the raft. When he returned to his quarters he tried to write a long letter to his wife. He wanted to tell her about the hours of waiting on the raft, the half-muttered prayers, the mingled thrill and despair of seeing the blood-red sun rise anew each morning.

"On the fourth day, when I saw the sun again," he wrote, "I felt like an Aztec's human sacrifice who waits at the end of the fiftieth year to see whether or not the sun will rise. Like him, I knew that when the sun rises again the world is saved and there is still hope.

"But like the Aztec I also knew that with the rising of the flaming beacon my individual torture would begin."

Benoway stopped and looked at the words. They sounded phony. They were not his words. He had never spoken like that to his wife in all of his married life, not even during courtship days. He tore up the offending paragraph.

"Certain men," he mused, "are not able to speak or write that way." And a persistent fear gained utterance, one that had haunted him for several years. "Am I lacking in passion? Is my love on a lower level than that of . . ."

The words would not come. In embarrassment he fumbled, even in his own mind. Then, half blushing, he finished the sentence, ". . . lower level than that of the great lovers?"

Reluctantly, Dr. Benoway concluded that he had never known the great passion that seemed to pulsate through the literature and drama of modern America. He had met Nancy, his wife, twelve years before. She was beautiful and engaged to marry his older brother, Robert. But Paul, who had merely finished internship, courted his brother's girl and married her.

Sometimes at night Paul writhed because Robert had seemed so hurt and yet had done nothing about the theft.

It would certainly seem that a man who had stolen his brother's girl, and before he had a practice, too, must have known something of passion. But that was not the case.

Nancy was simply a lovely and desirable girl who had retained those attributes into womanhood. But the breathless, flaming love that was supposed to precede and follow events like abducting your brother's fiancee was no part of Paul Benoway.

He was reluctant to admit that there was any deficiency in either himself or his wife. He was not given to introspection, but the fears that arose now, when he was trying vainly to write out a passionate avowal of his love, well, those fears made even Paul Benoway consider his sex life.

Coldly, he concluded that he was normal. That was all. He half-way apologised to himself for having brought the subject up.

"I don't know what it is," he said to himself.

He was in his dallas hut looking out over the Pacific. It was early evening. He turned out his light. No use trying to work any more tonight. He'd finish the letter tomorrow. Anyway, it was almost done and, if necessary, could be mailed just as it was. He had at least explained that he was safe and with no lasting injuries.

"Nancy is a lovely girl," he mused in the darkness. The waves beat upon the coral in endless symphony. "She's as fine a wife as a man could have. She's beautiful. She loves her children. She's an adornment. And she's not too slow-witted, either! No brainstorm, of course . . ." He banged himself on the knee.

"Brother," the cook declared impressively, "this dame was really class."

"Curse it," he muttered. "What right have I to analyse my own wife? If this wretched war . . ."

That was it! If this wretched, rotten war had not intervened, millions of people like Paul Benoway could have masked or muffled their uncertainties. They could have postponed admitting to themselves that their loves were bankrupt.

"But my love is not bankrupt!" Paul cried aloud to himself. "It's . . . that . . ." He rose from his chair. "How did I ever get into this mood in the first place? What has passion to do with life on this rock?"

His reverie was interrupted by a knock at the door of his hut. "May I come in?" a cheery voice inquired.

Paul peered into the darkness towards the insomniac ocean. "Oh! Come in!" he called. It was Lieut. Harbison.

"Thanks, Paul. Lovely night out, isn't it?"

"Yes, a true tropical night. Those palms against the moon make it look like a calendar, don't they?" Harbison was wearing a pilot's flight jacket, a pilot's baseball cap, and an expensive pair of moccasins. He was still very brown from exposure on the life-raft.

"I was hoping you hadn't gone to the movies," he said. "Have a request to make of you."

"What can I do for you, Bill?" the doctor asked. He liked to help Harbison out. Everybody liked to work with Harbison.

"Well, Paul, it's this way," the lithe young man said, draping himself into a chair, tapping against the wall with his well-oiled moccasin. "I have been approached by the chief censor with a tough problem." He tossed a letter on Benoway's table.

It had not yet been sealed, nor had it been stamped with the censor's stamp. It was a thick envelope.

"What have I to do with it?" Dr. Benoway asked.

"It's not ordinary censorship, Paul," Harbison replied, somewhat ill at ease. "It's a much tougher problem than that. And," he said in the low confiding voice that made even enlisted men want to work for him twice as hard, "you're about the only fellow who can help us. The only officer."

"That's flattering, I'm sure, Bill. State the case." And the doctor assumed a clinical attitude which he would never lose as long as he lived. He was the consulting physician again.

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No. 13

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IS DULUX IN YOUR FAVOURITE HUES.
IT FLOWS SO SMOOTHLY, GLEAMS SO BRIGHT,
.....(Missing Line).....

NOTE: Copy out these three lines and add your own last line, sending in the WHOLE FOUR LINES, with your name and address in block letters, on the same sheet.

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Mark your envelope "Dulux Jingles" and mail to reach Macquarie Broadcasting Service, Box 4290, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., by October 11.

Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 61

BILL HARBISON said slowly, "There's no case to state, Paul. It's all there." He pointed to the letter.

"Want me to read it?" Dr. Benoway asked.

"Yes, I do. But I'd rather you'd read it when I'm gone. If you don't mind?" And Bill rose to his feet, coughed in a little embarrassment, and smiled. "Just read it and tell me if we ought to take any action against the boy."

Harbison bowed himself out. His cheery voice sounded from the path leading down to the shore: "I'll walk down here and be back in about an hour. Form your own opinion."

Dr. Benoway picked up the envelope. Another was lying beneath it. He ran to the door of his dallas.

"Bill!" he called. "You've left two letters here!"

He heard running footsteps in the darkness. Harbison hurried back into the hut and looked at the second letter.

"Of course," he laughed in his clear tones. "That's my own. Brought it over for you to initial and stamp. I'd like to make the early boat with it and get it on the plane." He smiled at the doctor.

"I'll have it for you when you get back," Paul assured his friend. Harbison left once more and Benoway started to read the letter.

The envelope was dirty and addressed in a rough hand. The letter was apparently from Timothy Hewitt, a motor mechanic, third class. He was attached to the doctor's own unit. Funny, he'd never heard of Hewitt. Must be a new man.

The letter appeared to be addressed to Hewitt's wife, or it could be to his mother. "Mrs. Timothy Hewitt, 3127 Boulware Boulevard, El Pasco, Texas."

Dr. Benoway opened the envelope and pulled out the sheets. There were six of them. They were very thin, Hewitt's writing was large and clear.

"Dearest, Darling, Gorgeous, Adorable Bingo!!!" started the letter. Dr. Benoway cleared his throat. "There's passion for you!" he muttered. But there was no ridicule in his voice, nor in his thoughts. "There is passion!" he thought. "That's just what I mean!" He resumed the reading:

My own dearest, darlingest wife how I miss you and how I long that you were here right beside me in this small and dark tent, what a time we would have and how I would long to kiss you as you have never been kissed before, we would spend all night kissing and other things, if you know what I mean, and I'll bet you do (ha, ha).

We would wake up in the morning laughing and everything would be fine, wouldn't it my own darling, my adorable wife when I get up in the morning there is only an emptiness about my heart that never goes away all day long, even when I am eating the awful chow they serve here, and which they call food for a fighting man, with me it is like when I first saw you in Louisville that wonderful day four years ago.

I can see you as plain as if you were right here and that's just where you are forever and forever throughout all eternity, right here in my arms and if I ever thought another day would dawn without you with me forever, I would die.

Right now I'm sitting in my tent but I am there with you my adored darling in who I see everything good and kind that can ever be, I'm right there with you and it is almost time for bed. You say come on Tim let's go to bed we've got to get up in the morning and I laugh like always and say . . .

Dr. Benoway was perspiring, as young Hewitt's letter continued on growing all the time more and more intimate in its details. Dr. Benoway had never before read a letter quite like it.

"The thing's absolutely clinical," he said to himself. He looked at the last page again. It ended in an orgy of pictures and words.

"No wonder the censors don't know what to do! I don't know what to do myself." He carefully folded the many sheets of the letter and returned them to their envelope. He was tapping his left hand with the letter when Harbison reappeared.

"May I come in?" the lieutenant called cheerily from the darkness.

"Glad you're back," laughed the doctor, pouring them both a shot of whisky.

"Judging from your tone, you've finished the letter," Harbison observed.

"And what a letter, too!" Benoway tossed it over to his guest.

"Don't give it to me, Paul," Harbison laughed. "You're the doctor!"

"I don't know what a letter like that means," Benoway countered, picking it up again. "I'm no psychologist."

"I realise that, Paul," Harbison replied persuasively. "But you see our problem. Is a sailor like that likely to get into trouble? The old phrase, conduct prejudicial to the welfare of the Navy, or something like that? Is the boy likely to go off balance some night and wind up with some pretty serious charges against him?"

"I can't answer that, Bill. You should know that. Any young man is likely to write a letter like that once in his life. Most girls are good enough to burn the things and never speak to the boy again. Such letters are epi . . ."

"You don't understand, Paul," Harbison interrupted. "Hewitt writes two or three letters like that every week. Sometimes five in one week. Always the same!"

DR. BENOWAY indulged in an unprofessional whistle. "What kind of a man is he?"

"That's what has us worried. Every censor who has hit one of his letters immediately rushes it in to the chief censor. He says that he can tell when a new man hits one of Hewitt's letters."

"Who is this man Hewitt? Why didn't I hear of this before?"

"A new man. Came aboard while we were out sunbathing on the raft. The censors waited until I had recovered a bit before they presented me with the poser. I waited until you started seeing patients again. I don't think we'd better wait much longer on this. He needs some kind of treatment."

"I'd like to see the fellow, Bill," Dr. Benoway suggested.

"Right now?" Harbison asked.

"Yes! Right now! Will you break him out?" Dr. Benoway did not want to go to bed.

"Shall I bring him over here? Or to the office?"

"Make it here." In civilian life Paul Benoway treated many of his most complex cases in his own home. It gave the patient a feeling right from the start that "the doctor" was taking a personal interest in him. Nancy never objected.

Sometimes in women's involved neurotic cases Paul would say, "Wouldn't it be a good idea if my wife joined us for a few minutes? You know Mrs. Benoway, don't you?" And nine times out of ten the patient would agree to this most unprofessional procedure, for everyone knew Mrs. Benoway.

And there stood Timothy Hewitt, motor mechanic third, and that was his personal record in the folder on the desk.

Please turn to page 63

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Tales of the South Pacific

HARBISON'S pleasant voice, half suggesting that he would like to stay, half offering to go, asked, "Shall I see you later?"

"Yes, Lieut. Harbison," Paul replied in his business voice. "I'll see you later."

"You may return to your quarters as soon as the doctor releases you, Hewitt," Harbison said to the perplexed sailor. "Goodnight!" His cheery smile put the young man at ease.

"Be seated, Hewitt," the doctor said. "Excuse me for a moment while I study these papers."

Hewitt, a thin fellow of twenty-two, sat stiffly in his chair. He was not afraid, but he was on the defensive. As the doctor started to read he jumped up. "What's all this about, sir, what have I done wrong?"

"Hewitt!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Sit down!"

"Yes, sir!"

"You haven't done anything wrong, yet."

The young man breathed deeply and relaxed in his chair, obviously and completely bewildered. Dr. Benoway studied the papers.

"Timothy Hewitt. No middle name. Born 1921. Irish parents. Catholic. Louisville, Kentucky. Baker in civilian life. Married. No children. Boot camp at Great Lakes. Refused baker's training. First station San Diego A and R shops. No record of any trouble. Teeth fair. Eyes 18/20 and 20/20. No scars. No admission of venereal disease. Weight 157. Height 5ft. 7in. Intelligence test average. No comments."

Dr. Benoway thought a moment. "Average. Average. Average," he repeated under his breath. "And what is average, I wonder."

He said crisply, "Hewitt." The young man rose. "You may remain seated."

"Thank you, sir."

"So this is the package in which such passion comes!" Dr. Benoway muttered.

"What, sir?" the sailor asked.

"Nothing, Hewitt. I was just thinking."

Lt.-Comdr. Benoway studied the man with a military eye. Hewitt was clean cut, had probably put on a little weight, wore his clothes with a jaunty, Irish air, and looked like a good, clear-eyed, average sailor. If the man was psychopathic, he certainly did not betray it in his bearing.

"It's about this letter," Lt.-Comdr. Benoway said suddenly. "All of your letters as a matter of fact." He tossed the unsealed, uncensored letter towards the sailor. Hewitt reached for it.

"But that's my letter, sir!" he protested.

"I know it is, Hewitt, and that's what I wanted to ask you about."

"What's wrong with it? It's to my wife. I didn't say nothing about no ships or nothing."

"Nobody said you did, Hewitt."

The man breathed more easily and twirled the letter about in his hands. Dr. Benoway searched his papers. Yes, there it was, "Schooling Tenth Grade, Louisville, Kentucky."

"Hewitt," he began. The man leaned forward, a youngish, thin fellow perplexed at what might happen next. "Hewitt," the doctor repeated. "Don't you see anything wrong with that letter?"

Hewitt opened the letter and hastily scanned each page. "No, sir," he said. "There ain't a word about nothing."

Dr. Benoway leaned back in his chair and breathed very deeply. This was beginning to confuse him. "Look at page six, I think it is. The last page, Hewitt." He waited while the sailor shuffled the pages. "Don't you see anything strange about that? I mean is that just an ordinary letter?"

"Oh, no, sir!" Hewitt replied briskly. "It's a letter to my wife."

"I realise that, Hewitt. But . . ." Dr. Benoway coughed. The sailor waited. "The language, Hewitt? Is that ordinary?"

Hewitt studied the page. He flushed a little. "Well, sir. It is to my wife. That makes it a little different. Special, you might say."

Dr. Benoway looked at the amazing motor mechanic. Was the boy pulling his leg? Was this a big joke at his expense? Had Harbison staged all this? No, such a

Continued from page 62

thought was preposterous and ungallant. He decided, by heavens, that he'd have this thing out.

"Hewitt," he began again. The obvious perplexity in the young man's face unnerved him, but he went ahead. "You must be aware that the words you use there and the things you talk about, well . . ."

"But this is a letter to my wife, sir. That's what we got married for. That's what people get married for. So they can talk about things and things."

"What's your wife say about

"Come on in, it's 20 degrees cooler inside."

these letters, Hewitt?" Benoway blurted out.

"Bingo? Why she never says nothing, sir. Nothing that I remember."

"Her letters to you? Are they . . . like . . . that?" Dr. Benoway pointed at the letter which now lay on the table.

Hewitt smiled. "Not exactly like that," he said fondly. "I got one right here," he said suddenly, and before Dr. Benoway could stop him the sailor whipped out a sweaty wallet and produced a letter written in a fine Southern hand. It was from Louisville.

"You can read it if you wish," the man said with embarrassment. "You're just like a doctor, sort of."

Paul was pleased with the intended compliment. He opened the letter and read a little on the first page. Then he turned abruptly to the last page. He read only a few sentences there—this letter was written in passable English—blushed, and returned the letter. Hewitt took it and lovingly replaced it in the disintegrating wallet.

"Do you and your wife always write like that?"

"Well, you might say so, sir."

Benoway gritted his teeth and swore to himself. Well, son. You asked for it. Here it is . . .

"Hewitt," he said, "I don't know whether you're kidding the pants off me or not." (Oh, no, sir!) "But maybe I can tell you a few things that will clear the air. First of all, you could be arrested and put in gaol for writing a letter like that." (Don't interrupt me. Sit down.)

"A letter like that, and especially one like your wife's, is never written by a lady or a gentleman. It just isn't done. I should think you would have more respect for one another. That you might talk that way in your own bedroom is possible. But if you were to show that letter, either of them, around in the Navy, you could be court-martialled. Now don't you know any better, or do you?"

Lt.-Comdr. Benoway glowered at the sailor.

"But, sir," Hewitt replied. "She's my wife. I'm married to her. That's not just a letter. It's to my wife."

"Damn it all, Hewitt? Is this a game?"

"Oh, no, sir! I don't know what you're talking about." Hewitt showed no signs of standing on his dignity and playing the role of insulted virtue. He was clearly bewildered by the doctor's blast.

Dr. Benoway shook his head. Maybe the boy was telling the truth. He tried again. "Tell me, Hewitt. Why do you write letters like that?"

"It's just a letter to Bingo, Doctor."

"Have you always written to one another like that?"

AFTER a moment's silence, young Hewitt said, "Well, no, sir. You see, Bingo. That's my name for her. We were at a Bingo one night and we both yelled 'Bingo' at the same time, and that's how we met. We split a grand prize of twenty-five dollars. Well, at first, sir, Bingo was awful strange."

He paused again, then continued, "She lived with three sisters. Old women, that is, who brought her up. She wouldn't even let me kiss her. And when we were married . . . Well, you're a sort of a doctor, but this is hard to say.

"Well, Bingo wouldn't sleep with me very much, if you know what I mean, and if you'll pardon the expression, things was pretty much going to hell. So one night I just up and told her why I got married and what she got married for, and from then on things was different. I can tell you, and we got to love one another all over again, and we used to laugh at her old women.

"Then when I went away to war it all ended and I didn't know how to write about it, and our letters was pretty much like the old women again, but then one night I just sort of wrote exactly what I was feeling, and I just didn't give, if you'll excuse the expression, I just didn't give a goddam, if you'll excuse me, sir."

Dr. Benoway picked the letter from the table, sealed it, wrote his initials on it, and stamped it with his little inked censor's circle.

"I'll tell you what, Hewitt," he said. "You mail all of your letters right here from now on, will you? I'll trust you not to send any military secrets or information."

"Oh, sir, I'd never do that."

"I'll trust you, Hewitt. But I may censor one now and then to make sure." There was a long moment of silence. "You can go now, Hewitt."

"But, sir?"

"Yes?"

"You said my wife could be arrested . . ."

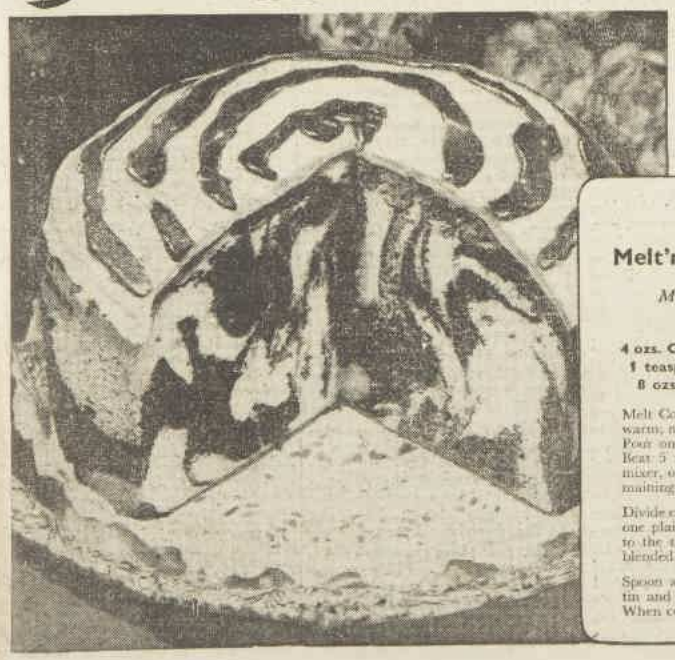
"Only if you show her letters to anyone else."

"I'd never do that, sir!"

"That's good. Well, good-night, Hewitt." The doctor extended his hand. Hewitt shook it and left.

Please turn to page 64

Bake Better Cakes this New Easy Way



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Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 63

DR. BENOWAY slumped into his chair. The haunting fear stayed with him that the entire scene had been an obscene joke cooked up by some ghoulish mind. But somehow or other Hewitt acted like a man, and like a man who might write just such a letter.

"Passion," Benoway said to himself. "By heaven! The Lord certainly dispenses uneven quantities of it to different people."

Ruefully, he picked up his own unfinished letter to his wife. He started to read it. "Dearest Nancy:" it began.

The colon looked formidable, but all of Dr. Benoway's letters had a colon in the salutation. He had read somewhere a long time ago: "It is always proper to use a colon in the salutation. It is dignified, universal, and appropriate for all occasions, especially when doubt arises as to the proper greeting." The letter ran:

"I would like to be the first to tell you that I have had a somewhat trying experience and that I have safely recovered from it without the slightest harm or injury. The details of this little adventure must remain a military secret until I see you in person. I can only give you the barest outlines at present, and even some of them may be deleted by the censor.

"Some time ago I had to make a routine flight over water. You can probably guess the nature of the mission. As sometimes happens, our plane ran into difficulty, and we were forced down into the ocean. We were able to break out a life raft without much difficulty, and before long we were aboard it.

"I am sorry to say that we had not too much water or food for the persons aboard. I was not the senior officer—the plane captain was—but I was given the important task of apportioning our rations among us. This I did to the best of my ability.

"The Navy has already announced that we were adrift for four days. Some of the passengers suffered from severe sunburn. All of us had chills, but I must say that when I think of the poor men who have been lost in the great ocean for twenty and thirty days I consider myself lucky indeed that we were rescued so soon.

"On the evening of the fourth day, after twelve hours of blazing sun and no rain, we saw a ship just at dusk, but it could not see us. Our captain made an instant judgment of the course on which we might come closest to the ship, and we started to paddle, swim alongside the raft, and pray.

"The ship passed us by, and I thought my heart would break, but in the darkness—for it was now pitch black—a little dog saw us, or smelt us, or heard us, and started to bark.

"Of course, we couldn't hear him bark, for if we could have heard him, the men aboard ship could have heard us, but there he was, barking when we were taken aboard. He was a little mixed dog like the one the Baxters used to have, and I thought him a very lovely dog indeed.

"Darling, all during the time I was in that raft and when I was aboard ship, I thought of you. It would have been terrible never to see you again. Once we had a bad time of it when the raft started to ship water, and I prayed pretty furiously, and you were all mixed up in the prayers.

"I don't want you to worry about anything, Nancy, for I am all right. When I think of what others have gone through, I'm a little bit ashamed, but I must admit that I am somewhat proud to say that I stood up as well as most. Only once was I really beaten down. On the fourth morning, when I saw the great sun again . . ."

Then followed the part about the Aztec sacrifice that had seemed so phony to him that he had torn it up.

Compared with Hewitt's letter, Paul's wasn't much of a job, and he knew it. For example, he hadn't put in the part about getting all mixed up when he prayed, so that he actually prayed to Nancy and not to God at all. Or that time in the third night when all he could see was Nancy. She had even obliterated the ocean then, and one of the gunners had asked, "What you looking at, Doc?"

Or the terrible moment when the ship sailed past in the darkness, seen but unseeing, and all that he could think of was not his loneliness in the ocean, but the fact that the silent ship was like Nancy when she left a room: a stately, gracious thing that all eyes followed.

Nor could he put on paper the fact that when he saw that blessed little hairy dog aboard the ship, he grinned all over, for it looked just like Nancy's sleepy head tossed in disarray upon a pillow at night.

"No," he said, "I'll tear up that letter and start all over again. It didn't happen the way I have it written at all. It was much deeper than that. It was probably the biggest experience I'll ever have in all my life. And I'll tell Nancy just that . . . and the part she played in it, too."

He took a new piece of paper, but as he did so he turned over Bill Harbison's unsealed envelope. Usually, like all officers, he merely initialled his friends' mail, relying upon their honesty. But to-night he idly revolved the letter in his fingers.

He opened the envelope and glanced casually at the first page. The salutation caught his eye. My only Beloved Lenore, it read.

AUTOMATICALLY, in the manner of all censors, Paul Benoway turned to the envelope to see if the letter were to Harbison's wife or to one of the several other girls the man wrote to. It was addressed to Mrs. Bill Harbison, 188 Loma Point, Alluquerque, New Mexico. It was to his wife.

Paul Benoway studied the salutation. My only Beloved Lenore! That's the way he wished he could write to Nancy, for she was his only girl, and she was his beloved. As beloved, that is, as anything he would ever know. But he never thought of openings like that, and if he had had to say the words aloud, he would have felt undressed. But in Bill's letter they seemed all right.

Mechanically, Dr. Benoway started to read the first page. Without wishing to do so—and with considerable feeling of guilt—he read the entire pulsating letter:

"My only Beloved Lenore,

"My darling, I have just returned from a trip which took me almost to the vale of death, and from which I returned loving you more than I ever did before in this life. There is so much to tell you that I hardly know where to begin. I know that all of it will worry you, but I can only say that terrible as it must seem to you, it brought me nearer to you than all the happy days of the past.

"We were on a difficult mission towards the Japs." (Dr. Benoway felt a little resentful. The trip was an ordinary, routine one down to Noumea to pick up vegetables. Harbison had gone along to see one of the French girls at Luana Pori.)

"Our flying boat was only moderately armed, but our skipper was about as resolute a man as I have ever known. We were flying at about 3000 feet near the island of . . ."

Please turn to page 65

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Tales of the South Pacific

HERE Harbison had cut out a section of his letter to simulate the censor's relentless vigil. His letter continued, "I must admit that I was half dozing off when I heard our rear gunner cry, 'Zeroes at seven o'clock!' And they were, two of them! They had the advantage of the ceiling on us, too.

"Everyone in the flying-boat prepared for the battle, but before I could even get to a gun the first bullets were smashing at us. They hit one gunner in the leg.

"Fortunately, we had a doctor with us. You remember my remarking about Dr. Benoway. Well, he fixed the lad up in no time. By now the Japs were on their way back, and we were impotent to stop them. Again their slugs tore through the cumbersome plane.

"On their sixth pass, the second Jap knocked out both of our motors and we started to plunge towards the sea. This threw the Japs off us for a few precious minutes.

"Down we plunged, and in that terrible time I could think only of you. My heart beat like a mammoth drum, always booming out, 'Lenore! Lenore!' It was a horrible fantasy which ended only when our magnificent pilot pulled us up at the last moment and skidded the plane along the tips of the waves and finally into a trough that stopped our flight."

("Heavens," Benoway thought. "We glided in perfectly from 1500 feet, just the way it's done in a clear sky. There were no waves, thank God, and there wasn't a Jap in sight. Some fool mechanic had left two large pieces of sandpaper in the oil tank. Don't ask me why!)

"As we perched for a precious half minute on the water, the dastardly Japs came at us again! But after one violent burst of firing, which killed the wounded gunner, we saw two American planes on the horizon. The Japs saw them, too, and off they went.

"There was a long dogfight. Three of the planes went into the ocean, all of them in flames. One American fighter limped away into the growing darkness. We don't know whether he reached shore or not, but wherever that boy is to-night, you can pray for him as a great hero who saved a raftful of defenceless men.

"There were eight of us on the raft, and I shall not tell you of the misery and the suffering. If it had not been for the iron will of our skipper and the skill of Dr. Benoway, few of us would be alive to write to our loved ones.

"The days were scorching. The nights were cold. We were fevered, and we had little to eat or drink.

"My beloved darling, I'll tell you about those fifteen days when I am once more safe in your cool arms. Suffice it to say that we were rescued. What is important is that all through the terrible days and lonely nights you were with me. I saw your face in the stars, and when the hot sun beat down upon our wretched raft, you were there to shade me.

"I cried aloud for you, and wherever hope dawned, you were there. A seagull followed us for a day, hoping for scraps that never came, for we, too, were hoping for scraps. All of the men saw in that gull some omen of good, but I saw only you.

"The soft whiteness was you. The constancy was you. The lovely dip of the wing was your lovely walk, and when the night shadows closed over the white gull, it was the darkness of our love closing over you."

("It was two brown birds," Benoway muttered to himself. "No gulls in sight.")

"If I live to be a thousand, my beloved wife, you will never be nearer to me than you were that night. I realised then what I had only half realised before: that you were all the good I know in this world and all the good I shall ever know.

Continued from page 64

"My body, my heart, and my immortal soul cried for you, and when we were rescued, it was not the rough arms of the sailors that carried me to safety, but your own dear, cherishing hands.

"When I see you again I may not be able to tell you all of these things, but sleep tightly to-night, my beloved darling, for my love wings its way across the boundless ocean to you, wherever you are. You are mine to-night, mine forever and forever until my heart is still and time no longer beats for us. I love you, oh, my darling."

Paul Benoway wiped his forehead and listened to the mighty ocean pounding on the coral reefs. He knew, and every officer in camp knew, that Bill Harbison was having serious girl trouble in the South Pacific. He knew of Bill's escapades at Luana Pori and with the blonde nurse.

But he also knew that Harbison had touched a throbbing core of life unknown to many men, unknown especially to Paul Benoway.

What did it matter how Harbison came to know about this side of life? What did it matter which key the man had used to unlock his heart, so long as it was wide open, so long as it was a heart to share, a heart that could give freely?

What matter were morals and old sayings if they kept you tied up like a burlap bag while other men unfolded their secrets and grew in the way God meant to have men grow?

Dr. Benoway looked at the dulcet words again. They were his words! That was the way he felt.

What is important is that through all the terrible days and lonely nights you were with me . . . the lovely dip of the wing was your lovely walk . . . my body, my heart, my immortal soul cried for you . . . That's what he, Paul Benoway, meant to say to his wife. That's what he had been trying to write.

Suddenly he took up his own unfinished letter to his wife, went with his finger to the part that read: "When I think of what the others have gone through I'm a little bit ashamed, but I must admit that I am somewhat proud to say that I stood up as well as most. Only once was I really beaten down."

He struck out the last sentence and got a fresh piece of paper. What business was it of anyone's that he was beaten down when he thought of an Aztec sacrifice to the sun god? That was a mighty silly thing to say in a letter when you compared it with what Bill Harbison was able to write. Furtively, he laid Bill's letter on the table before him and began to copy rapidly: My beloved darling, I'll tell you about it when I am once more safe in your cool arms.

Feverishly, as if this were the ultimate expression of what he had been storing up in his heart, he copied the last two pages of Bill's letter. His pen scrawled on, I love you, I love you. Oh my darling.

He dropped his pen and looked at the last line. In his letter he didn't look right. Never in his life had he said anything even remotely like Oh my darling. It sounded utterly silly when you said it that way: Oh my darling, Oh my darling, Oh my darling Clementine.

The words sounded good. He started to sing the whole song, and as he did so he began to laugh within himself and to feel very happy. With dancing motions he stuffed Bill Harbison's letter back into its envelope. He sealed the letter and stamped it. Then, with the same mincing, half-dancing gestures, he neatly tore up the last half of his own letter.

Laughing loudly by this time, he signed the part that he had first written. He signed, All my love, Paul.

FRISCO

I WAS on the LCS-108 when we hit Kuralei. I joined the small ship at Noumea and was on it nine days before we hit the beachhead. I got to know the crew pretty well.

LCS-108 was a landing craft, very small, loaded with guns. It was the smallest ship that went to the invasion under its own power. Its job was to carry an initial assault crew of twenty-five volunteers who were willing to do anything at the invasion and to do it first.

The skipper of the 108 was an Annapolis ensign. His men truly worshipped him.

"God help us if we meet a Jap battleship!" his men told me. "Cap'n will head right for it." I am sure he would have.

The exec. was a young schoolteacher from Nevada. He was an ensign, too, as were the other two officers. The exec. spoke in a high voice.

One of the seamen told me, "Only difference between the skipper and the exec. is that if you do wrong the skipper could knock you down. The exec. just makes you feel awful small."

I think the skipper was secretly miffed at having aboard an officer senior to himself. In case of trouble, you know. But I knew nothing about ships and was, I hope, no hindrance.

We made rendezvous at D-minus-two. It was a glorious feeling. You went to bed alone on the vast ocean. In the morning you were surrounded by big important ships of the line. I relaxed. If Jap planes did break through they would surely overlook a mere spot on the ocean like us.

The skipper, on the other hand, tried always to manoeuvre his craft so that in case of attack he could flank some big ship from a starboard torpedo. He doubled the anti-aircraft watch. I don't know when he slept. He was all over the ship, his first command. I saw him in the most unlikely places.

D-minus-one brought frequent squalls. This scared us, because Jap torpedo planes like to dive through small clouds and pepper the ocean with fish. We had four alarms that day, but no Jap planes.

Night fell and the storms went. We sailed under a magnificent sky, bright with stars. Then, in the distance, we saw other stars blazing in fury across the sky! The warships were at Kuralei! The bombardment was on!

We watched the fiery display for hours. Men who would work as never before when the sun came up could not drive themselves to sleep. They clustered about the rails and guns to watch the American Navy in its first great Pacific bombardment.

Like the men on deck, I could not sleep. Yet the bombardment tired my eyes and dulled my brain. It was too massive to understand. I went below to my own bunk and found that I was simply incapable of staying there alone. Like the youngest seaman, I was assailed by thoughts that were not meant for lonely harvest.

I went forward to the crew's recreation room. I knew that I was intruding, yet I had to. The enlisted men of LCS-108 were not unpleasant to me, since I had no authority over them. In fact, I think they may even have been glad to see me. They thought I knew much more than I did.

One of the men presently asked me, "How many men on an oiler, sir?"

"I don't know," I replied, though I knew what prompted the question.

Please turn to page 66

"IN GOOD HEALTH ALL YEAR ROUND"

Mr. E. Webb, printer, of 156 Windsor Street, Paddington, N.S.W., works hard, plays hard, lives a full life thanks to Kruschen.

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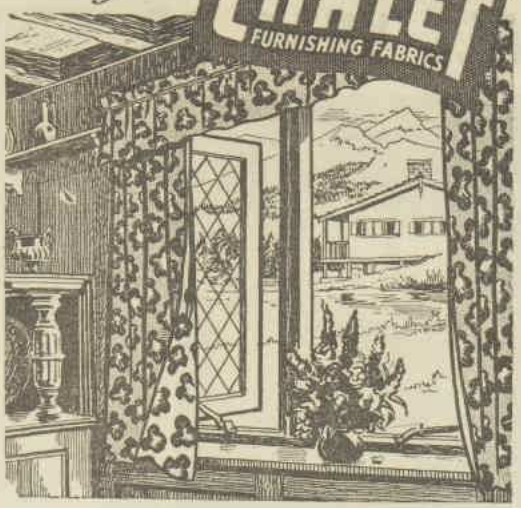

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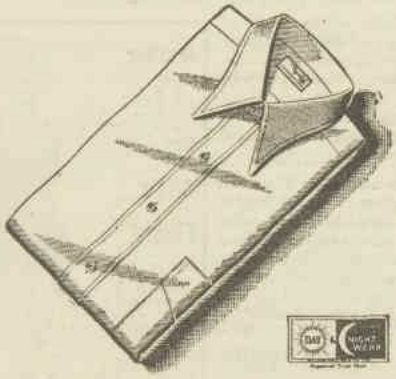

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Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 65

As we had watched the fiery bombardment, one of our own oilers had been hit. She blazed like a torch before she was finally sunk.

"Do you think they all went down, sir?" someone else asked.

"There are always some survivors, aren't there?" I reasoned. "Seems to me out there would be a pretty good place, if you had to get it anyway. Look at all the ships!"

"That's right!" the men said. They nodded to one another. The thought cheered me, and I think it did the same for the men. Suddenly I felt that a strong portion of America was there to protect us during the next few days. And we, in turn, were protecting others.

In the days that followed these reciprocal thoughts came back to me time and again. The sense of belonging is one of the great gifts men get in battle.

As the night wore on the exec. came down. He, too, was unwilling to stay in his quarters. Men coming off watch drifted by for a drink of water and stayed. The air was heavy with smoke. As always in such Navy groups, somebody started singing. "Where the deer and the antelope play . . ."

We joined in, trying to hit close harmonies and holding notes until they fairly groaned to be let loose.

A coxswain was, by nature and by talent, leader of the singing. He was a slight boy under twenty. He had a fine Irish tenor. Before the last notes of a song had died away, he would lead forth with another. Soon, as in every song-fest I attended, he started the two old favorites of all males voices.

In high falsetto he sang, "I'm coming, I'm coming! For my head is hanging low." I think we sang that song at least eight times. The real singers among us introduced variations and trills I had not heard before. The bellowers simply hit a few notes and held them.

Then the coxswain started the other favorite. "Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright." He had a fine voice for the carol, and was joined by a bass who rumbled the low notes.

It may seem strange that men aboard a ship about to go into action would choose to sing a German carol, a carol in fact so German that it sounds rude sung in English. Yet they did elect that song, and when they sang it, it was not German, even though more than half the men sing it in that language.

Nor, in a sense, was it a religious song. It was merely a succession of glorious notes which men could hold on to with affection as if they were, indeed, memories.

Our singing was interrupted at 0230 by loud explosions. We hurried on deck in time to see a series of ammunition dumps on Kuralei go up. Spires of flames shot several hundred feet into the air, subsided, and then sprang higher. Our own ships, hundreds of them it seemed, were illuminated.

Full in our path a cruiser loosed a salvo and passed into the darkness. Soon another took its place. New explosions rocked the beaches.

After some minutes we went below again. The mood for singing was gone. A heavy-set fireman, who, by choice, was in the assault party, sat next to me.

"I tell you, sir!" he said. "I haven't seen anything prettier than that since Market Street on a Saturday night!"

"You mean Market Street in Frisco?" a gunner's mate asked. Several men leaned forward.

"Yeah! Market Street in Frisco!" the fireman said.

"What a town!" someone said.

"You can say that again, buddy!" a seaman said approvingly.

Conversation ceased for a moment. All the men near me were thinking of Market Street in Frisco. Suddenly two men started speaking at the same time: "I remember . . ." one said. "It was on Market . . ." the second began. They laughed and each indicated that the other should speak first. The cook, whom nobody liked, broke the impasse.

"I was in Frisco four days," he said.

"So what?" a voice inquired.

"So it was the best leave I ever had," the cook replied. "It was Friday. I was having a fish dinner. I looked across the aisle and there was this babe."

"What was wrong with her?" the voice asked.

"Where that babe was wrong," the cook said, "you'd never notice it!" The voice had no comment. Men in the recreation room leaned forward. They were interested in what happened when the cook, whom they otherwise detested, met a girl in Frisco.

"What happened, cookie?" someone asked.

"Well, this babe—and I ain't kiddin', fellows. She was just about through her dessert and there I was on me soup. It looked to me like she was givin' me the eye, but you know how it is. A smart girl. Maybe she is. Maybe she ain't. She sort of puts it up to you."

"Thass the kind I like," a drooly voice interrupted. "The kind that puts it up to you."

"Knock it off! So what happened, cookie?"

"So quick as a wink I ditches my soup and steps beside her. 'You ain't finished your dinner!' she said. 'To hell with it!' I answered right quick. I give the waiter a couple of bucks and said, 'Keep the change!' Then the waiter said, 'But the young lady's?' So I slung him another two bucks. Well, the dame really gave me the eye then. She seen I was a spender."

"Then what happened, cookie?"

"We stepped out! And brother, this dame was class. When we went into a club or restaurant, guys like you looked up, but plenty!"

Again the voice broke in to ask, "What did she take you for, cookie, but plenty?"

"As a matter of fact," the cook replied. "She did. I spent one hundred and eighty bucks on that dame in four days."

"Whew!" a seaman whistled. "You did?"

"So help me, I did!" the cook answered. "One hundred and eighty bucks in four days. But it was worth more to me. We had taxis everywhere. Best seats everywhere. Went to two shows. Bought her some presents. Well, I seen you guys lose a hundred and eighty bucks in one night at crap. What you got for it? Me? For my dough I had me the best time in Frisco, for four days, with a dame that was strictly class!"

The men looked at cookie. They thought of him differently now. Even the heckler grudgingly granted him a point. "You got to admit it ain't to be sneezed at," he said. That was the limit he would go in approval, but his ambiguous surrender pleased cookie. He grinned.

All this time I was aware of a rasping sound in a corner to my right. As cookie stopped speaking, I turned to see what caused the sound.

"It's only Norval," a seaman said. I twisted my head farther and saw a thin, sour-faced fireman, perhaps twenty-three years old. He looked at me with that grim stare which officers see so often and which always means: "What the hell are you doing here?"

"Don't mind Norval," a chubby seaman advised.

Please turn to page 67

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Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 66

I NEVER found out what was supposed to be wrong with the man in the corner. During that long, fateful night he sat in the shadows. First he sharpened his bayonet to razor edge. Then he honed an eight-inch dagger which he took from his belt. When this was done he took off his shoes, and I saw they were studded with long steel spikes.

He sharpened each one of these, carefully, patiently, like a ball player who hears the opposing second baseman is a tough hombre.

All night Norval sat there. From time to time he looked up at the foolish gossips about the table. Twice he caught my eye. He glared at me contemptuously, blew breath through his nose, and returned to his scratching, raspy files. When I last saw him he was filing down the sear on his revolver, to make it fire at the slightest suggestion from his trigger finger. The steel on the sear was hard, and Norval's files made a thin, piercing sound.

"Lay off, killer!" a seaman cried.

Norval continued with his sear. He did not even look up, but the contempt of his shoulders and the toss of his head eloquently asked his old question: "What are you doing here?"

"I had a swell time in Frisco," a machinist's mate said. "My wife came out with me. We had a hard time finding a room, but we finally did. Gee, we went to the zoo, and the art gallery, and the Cliff House, and just about everywhere, I guess."

The room was silent. The last place in America most of these men had seen was Frisco. Their last fun was there, their last liberties. Some thought of the zoo; some remembered four movies in a row.

"A funny thing," the machinist's mate continued. "This may seem funny to some of you guys. But my wife and me decided we didn't want to have any kids till after the war. But being there in Frisco and knowing . . . Well, we got a little girl now. Like to see her?"

At the first sign of encouragement he whipped out a picture of as undistinguished a baby as I have ever seen. Men with no children looked at the bundle, grunted, and passed it on. Fathers appraised the infant, said nothing, and handed it along.

"I spent four days in Frisco, too," a thick-voiced fireman said. "In that Y.M.C.A. on the Embarcadero. I had dinner every day at Joe Di Maggio's, and got drunk every night. Boy, that was some four days! I met an Australian, and did we have a time! He got pinched, but they discharged him and told him to sober up. That night we put on a toot that you could hear in Seattle!"

"What did you do in Frisco?" a fireman asked me.

"I seem to have missed the fun," I said. "Got in there one night and left the next night on the Clipper."

"You flew out?" the men asked.

"Yes."

"Was it in the Mars?" they asked.

"No. Regular Clipper." The fact that I had flown out made me an authority.

"How soon do you think the war will end?" they asked.

"About four years," I said. This was greeted with silence. The men thought what four years would do to them.

"We can hope, can't we?" a wag said in sepulchral tones. "You know what they say, sir? Optimist: 'In 'forty-five, if I'm alive.' Pessimist: 'You and me in 'fifty-three.' Realist: 'Golden Gate in 'forty-eight.' Fool: 'A bit of heaven in 'forty-seven.' "

"I don't get it," a seaman said. "Why the fool?"

"Cause they won't be any heaven left in 'forty-seven! Guys back from Europe will use it all up!" The wag slapped the table.

"You think we'll be kept out here that long, sir?"

"Somebody will be," I said.

"You think you will be?"

"Could be."

"Ain't you mad about it, sir?"

"I was at first," I admitted.

"What happened?" the men asked. They were interested. This touched them, too.

"Oh, I sort of decided that it doesn't matter much when I get back," I said. Then the closeness of battle prompted me to honesty: "I don't think that I'm going to be stopped merely because somebody else got there first. I got a lot of work to do!"

A chief petty officer looked at me. "That's exactly how I feel, sir. Boy I got a lot to do when I get home! The longer I stay away the more certain I am I'll do it, too."

"What you gonna do?" a voice asked.

"That's my business," the C.P.O. said.

"I felt that same way in Frisco," a storekeeper added. "Said to myself, 'This is the last look for a long while. Make the most of it.' But you know what I did?"

There was a furious bombardment outside. We looked at our watches.

"I just couldn't make up my mind what to do first! So I lay in my room till about noon each day, got up, ate some lunch, and went back to bed. I was glad when the ship sailed."

"Me?" a yeoman asked. "Them days wasn't long enough for me. Them Frisco street cars! Boy, I bet I rode a hundred miles a day on them babies. I'd get on and ask every pretty girl I met what she was doing. I been to Boston, Panama, San Diego. None of them compares with Frisco for a liberty."

"Say?" a seaman interrupted. "Ain't we movin'?" We remained silent. Yes, we were moving. We were moving toward the beach. Again we looked at our watches. A head appeared in the hatchway.

"Assault party!" Norval dropped his files and leaped for the gangway. "Assault party! Prepare to land. Prepare to land!"

When the smoky room was emptied I went on deck. In the grey twilight of D-Day the first wave was going in. Fire raked them as they hit the coral. Jap guns roared in the grey dawn. But some of them got in! They were in!

And now the battleships lay silent. The aeroplanes withdrew. Men, human beings on two feet, men, crawling on their bellies over coral, with minds and doubtful thoughts and terrible longings . . . Men took over.

THE LANDING ON KURALEI

WE would have captured Kuralei according to plan if it had not been for Lieut.-Colonel Kenjuro Hyaichi. An honor graduate from California Tech, he was a likely choice for the job the Japs gave him.

As soon as our bombers started to soften up Konora, where we built the airstrip, the Jap commander on Kuralei gave Hyaichi his instructions: "Imagine that you are an American admiral. You are going to invade this island. What would you do?"

Hyaichi climbed into a plane and had the pilot take him up 12,000 feet. Below him Kuralei was like a big cashew nut. The inside bend faced north, and in its arms were two fine sandy bays. They were the likely places to land. You could see that even from the air.

But there was a small promontory protruding due south from the outside bend. From the air Hyaichi studied the promontory with great care. "Maybe they know we have the two bays fortified. Maybe they will try that promontory."

The colonel had his pilot drop to three thousand feet and then to five hundred. He flew far out to sea in the direction from which our search planes came. He roared in six times to see if he could see what an American pilot, scared and in a hurry, would think he saw.

Then he studied the island from a small boat. Had it photographed from all altitudes and angles. He studied the photographs for many days. He had two Jap spies shipped in one night from Truk. They crept ashore at various points.

"What did you see?" he asked them. "Did you think the bay was defended? What about that promontory?"

He had two trained observers flown over from Palau. They had never seen Kuralei before. When their plane started to descend, they were blindfolded. "The bays?" Hyaichi asked. "And that promontory? Did you think there was sand in the two small beaches there? Did you see the cliffs?"

Jap intelligence officers brought the colonel sixty-page and seventy-page reports of interrogations of American prisoners. They showed him detailed studies of every American landing from Guadalcanal to Konora. They had a complete book on Admiral Kester, an analysis of each action the admiral had ever commanded.

At the end of his study Lieut.-Colonel Hyaichi ruled out the possibility of our landing at the promontory.

"It couldn't be done," he said. "That coral shelf sticking out two hundred yards would stop anything they have."

But before the colonel submitted his recommendation that all available Jap power be concentrated at the northern bays, a workman in Detroit had a beer.

After his beer this workman talked with a shoe salesman from St. Louis, who told a brother-in-law, who passed the word on to a man heading for Texas, where the news was relayed to Mexico and thence to Tokio and Kuralei that one of the big motor firms was "building a boat that can climb over anything."

Lieut-Colonel Hyaichi tore up his notes. He told his superiors: "The Americans will land on either side of the promontory." "How can they?" he was asked. "They have new weapons," he replied. "Amphibious tanks with treads for crossing coral."

Almost a year before, Admiral Nimitz had decided that when we hit Kuralei we would not land at the two bays. "We will hit the promontory. We will surprise them."

Fortunately for us, Lieut-Colonel Hyaichi's superiors were able to ignore his conclusions. It would be folly, they said, to move defenses from the natural northern landing spots. All they would agree to was that Hyaichi might take whatever material he could find and set up secondary defenses at the promontory. How well he did his job you will see.

At 0527 our first amphibs hit the coral shelf which protruded underwater from the shore. It was high tide, and they half rode, half crawled toward land. They had reached a point twenty feet from the beach, when all hell ripped loose.

Lieut.-Colonel Hyaichi's fixed guns blasted our amphibs right out of the water. Only a few men reached shore.

Please turn to page 68

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Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 67

AT 0536 our second wave reached the imaginary line twenty feet from shore. The Jap five-inch guns ripped loose. Of nine craft going in, five were sunk. Of the three hundred men in those five amphibs, more than one hundred were killed outright. But some reached shore. They formed a company, the first on Kuralei.

It was now dawn. The LCS-108 had nosed in toward the coral reef to report the landings. We sent word to the flagship. Admiral Kester started to sweat at his wrists. "Call of all landing attempts for eighteen minutes," he said.

At 0544 our ships laid down a gigantic barrage. How had they missed those five-inch guns before? How had anything lived through our previous bombardment? Many Japs didn't. But those hiding in Lieut.-Colonel Hyaichi's special pill-boxes did. And they lived through this bombardment, too.

On the small beach to the west of the promontory 118 men huddled together as the shells ripped overhead. Our code for this beach was Green, for the one to the east, Red.

The lone walkie-talkie on Green Beach got the orders: "Wait till the bombardment ends. Proceed to the first line of coconut trees." Before the signalman could answer, one of our short shells landed among the men. The survivors re-formed, but they had no walkie-talkie.

At 0602 the third wave of amphibs set out for the beach. The vast bombardment rode over their heads until they were on to the coral shelf. Then a shattering silence followed. It was full morning. The sun was rising. Our amphibs waddled over the coral.

At the fatal twenty-foot line some Japs opened up on the amphibs. Three were destroyed. But eight got through and deposited their men ashore. They made for the first line of coconut trees.

They were halfway to the jagged stumps when the Japs opened fire from carefully dug trenches behind the trees. Our men tried to outfight the bullet but could not. They retreated to the beach. The coconut grove was lined with fixed positions, a trench behind each row of trees.

At 0631 American planes appeared. F6Fs. They ripped Green Beach for twelve minutes.

At 0710 the big ships opened up again. They fired for twenty-eight minutes this time, concentrating their shells about sixty yards inland from the first row of coconut stumps.

At 0748 we heard the news from Red Beach on the other side of the promontory. "Repulsed four times. First men now safely ashore!" Four times! we said to ourselves. Why, that's worse than here!

This was fantastic! When you looked at Alligator back in Noumea you knew it was going to be tough. But not like this!

"Dear, come and get us—it's the rush hour, and they won't let us on the bus."

There were nine rows of coconut trees. Then a cacao grove. The edge of that grove was Line Albany. We had to reach the cacaos by night. We know that an immense blockhouse of sod and stone and concrete and coconut trees would have to be reduced there before night. We were expected to start storming the blockhouse in 1045. That was the schedule.

At 1422 Admiral Kester put into operation his alternative plan. While slim beachheads were maintained at Red and Green all available shock troops were ordered to hit the rugged western side of the promontory.

We did not know if landing craft could get ashore. All we knew was that if they could land, and if they could establish a beach, and if they could cut a path for men and tanks down through the promontory, we might flank each of the present beachheads and have a chance of reaching the cacaos by dark.

At 1425 we got our orders. "LCS-108. All hands to Objective 66." The men winked at one another. They climbed into the landing barges. The man whose wife had a baby girl. The young boy who slept through his leave in Frisco. They went into the barges. The sun was starting to sink westward as they set out for shore.

At 1448 a rear-admiral reported to Kester, "Men securely ashore at Objective 66." The admiral diverted all available barges there. Sonova Beach was invaded.

At 1502 Admiral Kester sent four tanks ashore at Sonova with orders to penetrate the promontory and to support whichever beach seemed most promising. Two hundred men went along with axes and shovels.

At 1514 came the Jap's only airborne attack that day. About thirty bombers accompanied by forty fighters swept in from Truk. They tried for our heavy ships. The fleet threw up a wilderness of flak. Every ship in the task force opened up with its five-inchers. The air was heavy with lead.

Meanwhile power had been building up on Green Beach. At 1544, with the sun dropping lower toward the ocean, they tried the first row of coconut trees again. They were driven back. This time, however, not quite to the coral. They held on to some good positions fifteen or twenty yards inland.

At 1557 Admiral Kester pulled them back on to the coral. For the last time that day. He sent the planes in to rout out that first trench. This time, with noses almost in the coconut stumps, our fliers roared up and down the trenches.

At 1607 the planes withdrew. At a signal, every man on that beach, every one, rose and dashed for the first trench. The Japs knew they were coming, and met them with an enfilading fire. But the Green Beach boys piled on.

There was a muddled fight in the trench. Then things were quiet. Some Americans started crawling back to pick up their wounded. That meant our side had won. Our men were no longer on coral. They were inland. On Kuralei's earth.

At 1618 Admiral Kester made his decision. Green Beach was our main chance. Hang on, Red! But everything we had was thrown at Green.

At 1629 about a hundred amphibs sped for Green Beach. They were accompanied by a tremendous barrage that raked the western end of the beach toward the cliffs. Thirty planes strafed the Jap part of the promontory. Two amphibs were destroyed. But more than ninety made the beach.

Please turn to page 69

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Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 68

NOW, no matter how many Japs counter-attacked, we had a chance to hold the first trench.

"A tank!" our lookout shouted. I looked, but saw none. Then, yes! There was a tank! But it was a Jap tank. Three of them! The Jap general had finally conceded Lieut.-Colonel Hyaichi's point. He was rushing all movable gear to the promontory. And our own tanks were still bogged down in the jungle.

"LCS-108! Beach yourself and use rockets!" The order came from the flagship. With crisp command the young skipper got up as much speed as possible. He drove his small craft as near the battle lines as the sea would take it.

We braced ourselves and soon felt a grinding shock as we hit coral. We were beached, and our bow was pointed at the Jap tanks.

Our first round of rockets went off with a low swish and headed for the tanks. "Too high!" the skipper groaned. The barrage shot into the cacao trees. The Jap tanks bore down on our men in the first ditch. Our next round of rockets gave a long hisss. The first tank exploded loudly and blocked the way of the second Jap.

At this moment a Jap five-incher hit the 108. We heeled over to port. The men at the rocket-launching ramps raised their sights and let go with another volley. The second tank exploded.

The third Jap tank stopped firing at our men in the first trench and started lobbing shells at LCS-108. Two hit us, and we lay far over on the coral. Then some foolhardy gunners on a cruiser ignored our men in the first trench. Accurately they plastered the third tank.

We breathed deeply. The Japs probably had more tanks coming, but the first three were taken care of.

Our skipper surveyed his ship. It was lost. It would either be hauled off the reef and sunk or left there to rot. He felt strange. His first command! What kind of war was this? You bring a ship all the way from Norfolk to stop two tanks. On land. You purposely run your ship on a coral reef. It's crazy.

At 1655 the Marines in trench one, fortified by new strength from the amphibs, unpredictably dashed from the far western end of their trench and overwhelmed the Japs in the opposite part of trench two.

At 1659 more than a thousand Jap reinforcements arrived in the area.

But as they moved through the grove the skipper of the LCS-108 poured five rounds of rockets right into their middle. Results passed belief. Our men in trench two stared in frank astonishment at what the rockets accomplished. Then, shouting, they swamped the third Jap trench before it could be reinforced.

At 1722, when the sun was beginning to eat into the treetops of Karalei, our tanks broke loose along the shore of the promontory. Sixty sweating, foot-slogging axemen dragged themselves after the tanks.

But ahead lay an unsurmountable barrier of rock. The commanding officer of the tanks appraised the situation correctly. He led his menage back into the jungle. The Japs also foresaw what would happen next. They moved tank destroyers up. Ship fire destroyed them. We heard firing in the jungle.

At 1740 our position looked very uncertain. We were still six rows from Line Albany. And the Japs had their blockhouse right at the edge of the cacaos. Our chances of attaining a reasonably safe position seemed slight when a fine shout went up. One of our tanks had broken through!

Then slowly crawling out of the jungle came the other three. Their treads were damaged. But they struggled on. When the gloating Jap tanks saw them coming they hesitated. Then, perceiving the damage we had suffered, the Japs charged.

Our tanks stood fast and fired fast. The Japs were ripped up and down. One quit the fight. The other came on to its doom.

At 1742 eleven more of our tanks landed on Sonova Beach. Then an endless stream of barges hit Green Beach. How changed things were! On one wave not a single shot from shore molested them.

We got Admiral Kester's message: "Forty-eight minutes of daylight. A supreme effort."

At 1749 the Japs launched their big counter-attack. They swept from their blockhouse in wild assault. Our rockets sped among them, but did not stop them. It was the men in trench three that stopped them, though how they did it, I don't know.

At 1803 Admiral Kester sent his message: "You can do it. Twenty-seven minutes to Line Albany!"

We were then four rows from the blockhouse. But we also knew that trenches six and seven were tougher than anything we had yet tackled. So for the last time Admiral Kester sent his beloved planes in to soften up the trenches.

In the glowering dusk they roared up and down between the charred trees, hiccuping vitriol. The grim, terrible planes withdrew. There was a moment of waiting.

We waited for our next assault. We waited for new tanks to stumple out of the promontory. We waited in itching dismay for that tropic night. We were so far from the blockhouse! The sun was almost sunk into the sea.

"He was our very best bird-watcher until he started watching that Digby woman!"

What we waited for did not come. Something else did. From our left flank, toward the cliffs, a large concentration of Jap reinforcements broke from heavy cover and attacked the space between trenches one and two.

It was seen in a flash that we had inadequate troops at that point. LCS-108 and several other ships made an instantaneous decision. We threw all our fire power at the point of invasion. Rockets, five-inchers, eight-inchers, and intermediate fire hit the Japs. They were stopped cold. Our lines held.

At 1809, with guns spluttering, eight of our tanks from Sonova Beach burst out of the jungle. Four of them headed for the blockhouse. Four tore right down the alleyway between trenches five and six. These took a Jap reinforcement party head on. The fight was foul and unequal. The tanks rumbled on.

At the blockhouse it was a different story. Tank traps had been well built in that area. Our heavies could not get close to the walls.

"Move in the flame-throwers. Everything you have. Get the blockhouse." The orders were crisp. They reached the Marines in trench five just as the evening star became visible.

Eight husky young men with nearly a hundred pounds of gear apiece climbed out of the trench. Making an exceptional target, they blazed their way across six and seven with hundreds of protectors. They drew a slanting hailstorm of enemy fire.

But if one man was killed, somebody else grabbed the cumbersome machinery. In the gathering darkness they made a weird procession.

A sergeant threw up his hands and jumped. "No trenches after row seven!" A tank whirled on its right tread and rumbled over. Now, with tanks on their right and riflemen on their left, the flame-throwers advanced.

From every position shells hit the blockhouse. It stood. But its defenders were driven momentarily away from the portholes. This was the moment!

With hoarse cries our flame-throwers rushed forward. Some died and fell into their own conflagration. But three flame-throwers reached the portholes. There they held their spuming fire. They burned away the oxygen of the blockhouse. When they stepped back from the portholes, the blockhouse was ours.

Field headquarters were set up that night on Green Beach. I went ashore in the dark.

Someone came to report: "Colonel, that schedule for building the air-strip is busted wide open. Transport carrying LARU-8 hit. Heavy casualties." I grabbed the man's arm.

"Was that the transport that took a direct hit?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, still dazed. "Right in the belly."

"What happened?" I rattled off the names of my friends in that unit. Benoway, in the leg. The cook, dead. The old skipper, dead.

"What happened to Harbison?" I asked.

The man looked up at me in the yellow light. "Are you kidding, sir?"

"No! I know the guy."

"You know him? Hmmm. I guess you don't! You haven't heard?" His eyes were excited.

"No."

"Harbison pulled out four days before we came north. All the time we were on Efate he couldn't talk about anything but war. 'Hold me back, fellows. I want to get at them!' But when our orders came through he got white in the face. Arranged it by airmail through his wife's father. Right now he's back in New Mexico. Rest and rehabilitation leave."

"That little Jewish photographic officer you had?" I asked, sick at the stomach.

"He's dead," the man shouted. He jumped up. "The old man's dead. The cook's dead. But Harbison is back in New Mexico." He shouted and started to cry.

"Knock it off!" a Marine colonel cried.

"The man's a shock case," I said. The Colonel came over.

"Yeah. He's the guy from the transport. Fished him out of the drink. Give him some morphine, and shut him up. Now where's that extra .50 calibre ammo?"

The reports dragged in. We were exactly where Alligator said we should be. Everything according to plan. That is, all but one detail. Casualties were far above estimate. It was Hyaichi.

We hadn't figured on him. We hadn't expected a Cal Tech honors graduate to be waiting for us on the very beach we wanted.

"We'll have to appoint a new beachmaster," a young officer reported to the Colonel.

"Ours get it?" the Colonel asked.

"Yes, sir. He went inland with the troops."

The Colonel swore. "I told Fry a hundred times . . ."

"It wasn't his fault, sir. Came when the Japs made that surprise attack on the flank."

Please turn to page 70

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Tales of the South Pacific

Continued from page 69

FURIOUS fighting sounded to the west. The Colonel looked up. "Well," he said, "we lost a good beachmaster. You take over to-morrow. And get that ammo in and up."

I grabbed the new beachmaster by the arm. "What did you say?" I whispered.

"Fry got his."

"Tony Fry?"

"Yes. You know him?"

"Yes," I said weakly. "How?"

"If you know him, you can guess." The young officer wiped his face. "His job on the beach was done. No more craft coming in. We were attacking the blockhouse. Fry followed us in. Our captain said, 'Better stay back there, lieutenant. This is Marines' work.' Fry laughed and turned back.

"That was when the Japs hit from the cliffs. Our own rockets wiped out some of our men. Fry grabbed a carbine. But the Japs got him right away. He didn't even fire the carbine once."

I felt sick. "Thanks," I said.

The Colonel came over to look at the man from LARU-8. He grabbed my arm. "What's the matter, son? You better take a shot of that sleeping stuff yourself," he said.

"I'm all right," I said. "I was thinking about a couple of guys."

"We all are," the Colonel said. He had the sad, tired look that old men wear when they have sent young men to die.

Looking at him, I suddenly realised that I didn't give a damn about Bill Harbison. I was mad for Tony Fry. That free, kind, independent man. In my bitterness I dimly perceived what battle means.

In civilian life I was ashamed until I went into uniform. In the States I was uncomfortable while others were overseas. At Noumea I thought, "The guys on Guadal! They're the heroes!" But when I reached Guadal I found that all the heroes were somewhere farther up the line. And while I sat in safety aboard the LCS-108 I knew where the heroes were. They were on Kuralei.

Yet, on the beach itself, only a few men ever really fought the Japs. I suddenly realised that from the farms, and towns, and cities all over America an unbroken line ran straight to the few who storm the blockhouses. No matter where along that line you stood, if you were not the man at the end of it, the ultimate man with his sweating hands upon the blockhouse, you didn't know what war was.

You had only an intimation, as of a bugle blown far in the distance. You might have flashing insights, but you did not know. By the grace of God you would never know.

Alone, a stranger from these men who had hit the beaches, I went out to dig a place to sleep. Two men in a foxhole were talking. Eager for some kind of companionship, I listened in the darkness.

"Don't give me that stuff," one was saying. "Europe is twice as tough as this!"

"You talk like nuts," a younger voice retaliated. "These yellows is the toughest fighters in the world!"

"I tell you not to give me that!" the older man repeated. "My brother was in Africa. He hit Sicily. He says the Krauts is the best all round men in uniform!"

"Lend me your lighter." There was a pause at the younger man used the flameless lighter.

"Keep your fool head down," his friend warned.

"If the Japs is such poor stuff, why worry?"

"Like I said," the other reasoned. "Where did you see any artillery barrage to-day? Now if this was the Germans, that bay would of been filled with shells."

"I think I saw a lot of barges get hell," the young man argued.

"You ain't seen nothing! You mark my words. Wait till we try to hit France! I doubt we get a ship ashore. Them Krauts is plenty tough. They got mechanised, that's what they got!"

"You read too many papers!" the second Marine argued. "You think when they write up this war they won't say the Jap was the toughest soldier we ever met?"

"Look! I tell you a thousand times. We ain't met the Jap yet. Mark my words. When we finally tangle with him in some place like the Philippines . . ."

"What were we doin' to-day? Who was them little yellow fellows? Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs? Where was Snow White?"

"Now wait! Now wait just a minute! Answer me one question. Just one question! Will you answer me one question?"

"Shoot!"

"No ifs and ands and buts?"

"Shoot!"

"All right! Now answer me one question. Was it as tough as you thought it would be?"

There was a long moment of silence. These were the men who had landed in the first wave. The young man carefully considered the facts.- "No," he said.

"See what I mean?" his heckler reasoned.

"But it wasn't no pushover, neither," the young man defended himself.

"No, I didn't say it was. But it's a fact that the Nips wasn't as tough as they said. We got ashore. We got to the blockhouse. Little while ago I hear we made just about where we was expected to make."

"But on the other hand," the young Marine said, "it wasn't no picnic. Maybe it was as tough as I thought last night!"

ONCE again the older Marine protested, "Don't give me that stuff! Last night we told each other what we thought. And it wasn't half that bad. Was it? Just a good tough tussle. I don't think these Japs is such hot stuff. Honest, I don't!"

"You think the way the Germans surrendered in Africa makes them tougher?"

"Listen, listen. I tell you a hundred times. They was pushed to the wall. But wait till we hit France. I doubt we get a boat ashore. That's one party I sure want to miss."

There was a moment of silence. Then the young man spoke again. "Burke?" he asked. "About last night. Do you really think he'll run a fourth term?"

"Listen! I tell you a hundred times! The American public won't stand for it. Mark my words. They won't stand for it. I thought we settled that last night!"

"But I heard Colonel Hendricks saying . . ."

"Please, Eddie! You ain't quotin' that fathead as an authority, are you?"

"He didn't do so bad gettin' us on this beach, did he?"

"Yeah, but look how he done it. A slaughter!"

"You just said it was easier than you expected."

"Please, Eddie! We been through all that before. I got a brother so dumb I wouldn't let him make change in my store. Now he's a captain! So I'm supposed to be impressed with a guy that's a colonel! He's a butcher, that's what he is. Like I tell you a hundred times, the guy don't understand tactics."

This time there was a long silence. Then Eddie spoke, enthusiastically. "Oh, boy! When I get back to Bakersfield!" Burke made no comment. Then Eddie asked, "Tell me one thing, Burke."

"Shoot."

"Do you think they softened this beach up enough before we landed?"

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Tales of the South Pacific

BURKE considered a long time. Then he gave is opinion: "It's like I tell you back in Noumea. They got to learn."

"But you don't think they softened it up enough, do you, Burke?"

"Well, we could of used a few more big ones in there where the Japs had their guns. We could of used a few more in there."

Silence again. Then: "Burke, I was scared when we hit the beach."

"Just a rough tussle!" the older man assured him. "You thank your lucky stars you ain't goin' up against the Krauts. That's big league stuff!"

Silence and then another question: "But if the Japs is such pushovers, why you want me to stand guard to-night while you sleep?"

Burke's patience and tolerance could stand no more. "Dammit," he muttered. "It's war! If we was fighting the Eyetalians, we'd still stand guard! Plain common sense! Call me at midnight. I'll let you get some sleep."

A CEMETERY AT HOGA POINT

I WAS flown down to Konora to recruit aviation replacements for LARU-8, which had been destroyed at Kuralei. As always, there were ten volunteers for each job up front. The skipper said, "Isn't LARU-8 the unit that waited almost a year for something to do?"

"Yes," I said. "Then it hurried to Kuralei just in time to catch a bomb in the belly."

"You're stealing my best men, but go ahead."

We flew the key men north. The rest of us waited for a transport. Tired and sweating, I leaned forward on the table. "Was Kuralei that tough?" the skipper asked.

"Not for me," I said. "Some of the fellows on the beaches, yes. But I did see a lot. You ever know Tony Fry?"

"Sure! He had that beer-bottle TBF didn't he? Used to see him in Guadal. He get it?"

"Yes," I said. I looked away. My right eye was twitching. I couldn't make it stop.

"Commander," the skipper said. "You're getting a case of nerves. What you need is a fishing party. I got some old togs. We'll go out and soak up some sun."

Konora was peaceful. As I gazed at it from the ammunition scow on which we fished, the island seemed asleep. Its low hills were beautiful against the deep sky. In the bend of the island there was a white slash across the green hill.

"That's where Pearlstein ripped away the coral," I recalled.

A gaunt steam shovel worked by the bay, lifting live coral for patching the airstrip. From time to time silvery bombers, white against the dark sky, settled down on the strip or rose from it in graceful circles.

Far out at sea slim birds of passage dived breathlessly at schools of fish. At the edge of the reef breakers shot slivery spume into the air. Along the horizon the ultramarine sky joined the grey-blue sea. I closed my eyes from this enchanting beauty. It was so remote from the torn coconut trees of Kuralei.

"It's not bad from out here," the skipper said.

It was difficult to believe that on Konora nine hundred and seventeen Japs were buried in graves patiently dug by Marines and Sea Bees. Nor did it seem possible that two hundred and eighty-one Americans lay on that island in timeless sleep. Only a few weeks before this peaceful land had been torn and twisted like Kuralei.

Our ammunition barge now lay opposite Hoga Point. I said to the skipper, "Would you think me crazy if I asked you to put me ashore here? I can't seem to get things under control. I'd like to walk back to camp through the trees."

"You're the visitor," he said indulgently. He had the coswain row me ashore.

BEFORE long I was standing at the head of a small promontory which climbed slightly from the sea until it reached a height of sixty or seventy feet above the waves. At that level it formed a plateau which overlooked the vast Pacific on one side and the soft lagoon on the other.

Here, on the ruins of their enemy, the Americans had built their cemetery.

A white picket fence surrounded the burial ground. From one corner rose a slim steel flagpole. From it fluttered an American flag. Because the air was so clean, the white stripes and the stars shone more beautifully than any I had ever seen before.

Before me lay the dead, the heroic dead who took the island. Upon a strange plateau, on a strange island, in a strange sea, far from their farms and villages, they slept forever beside the lagoon which bore them to their day of battle. Over them the sea birds dipped in endless homage. Above them the deep sky erected a cathedral.

I cannot put into words the emotions that captured me as I looked upon the graves of my friends. Never once during the five weeks I helped to plan the operations that engulfed Konora, not once at Kuralei, did I believe that I would die. No more did any man who now lay still in death.

The Marine in the prow of the ship, he might die. The SeaBee who made noises when he ate, he might topple from the crane. But not I!

Yet there before me lay almost three hundred Americans who thought as I had thought. They could not die. But there were the white crosses. I was appalled by the relentless manner in which one dead

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plus one dead plus one dead add up to three white crosses.

Lonely and bitter, I leaned against the picket fence. It was then that I noticed a tall, very thin Negro ambling toward me. He walked like one of the mechanical ducks which dull-eyed men sell on the street corners of New York, a waddle-walk obtained by never lifting either foot completely from the ground. But the Negro gave the shuffle a certain dignity. He looked as if he owned Hoga Point, as if he had lived there all his life.

"Aftanoon, suh," he drawled. He was dragging a rake which he pushed against the picket fence. Holding it with both hands before his chest, he leaned forward. "Yo'-all lookin' fo' sumbuddy, suh? Or you jes' lookin?"

"I'm just looking," I replied. "May I come in?"

"You certainly kin, suh!" the tall Negro replied. He pointed to the gate in the white pickets. "Won't you please come in, suh? It's a real pleasure to have officers visit the cemetery. Me 'n' Denis, we doan' see much people up dis yere way. Please to come in!"

I followed him to the gate, he on the inside of the pickets, I on the outside. Graciously he opened the gate and then carefully closed it.

"I finds sittin' under dem trees mos' beneficial," he said, indicating several tall trees whose shadows fell within the fence. He slowly showed me to a rude hassock, probably the stump of an old tree overgrown with moss. He was correct. The seat in the shadows was beneficial.

"Me 'n' Denis, we sits here right often when de sun get too hot. Sun in dese yere latitudes is pow'ful strong sometimes." He spoke with a calm drawl which matched his gait. Gripping the rake handle firmly, he let himself down upon the earth beside me.

"Who is Denis?" I inquired.

"Me 'n' Denis, we runs dis yere place," the Negro replied.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, me 'n' Denis we is de only people dat works yere," he drawled. "Seem lak nobody else want to work in a place lak dis yere." With a languid sweep of his hand he indicated the white crosses.

"Is Denis a colored man, too?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered. "Me 'n' Denis, we is bof' cullud. He f'om Geo'gia, I f'om Mississippi."

"Isn't it strange," I asked, "for colored men to like work in a cemetery?"

My guide laughed, gently and easily. "Yes! Yes! I knows jes' what you'-all means," he said. "All dem jokes about ghos's and cullud men. But what yo'-all doan' see," he added quietly, "is dat dey ain' no ghos's up here!"

He waved his hand once more across the graves. I waited for him to speak again.

"Up here," he continued, "dev is only heroes. Me 'n' Denis has often remarked dat never again will we be surrounded only by heroes. I 'spect we likes our work better'n any other men on dis yere rock. Would you like to walk among de graves, suh?" he inquired. "We got some mighty in'erestin' graves in here."

Slowly, by means of the rake handle, he pulled himself to his feet. He led me to a small corner of the cemetery.

"Dese yere is de men dat took de las' Jap charge," he said softly, like the verger of the cathedral at Antwerp. "Wiped out. Ever'one of dem." He dropped his voice still lower. "Some of dem we couldn't even find properly."

He raised his voice. "But here dey all lie. Sleepin'. It doan' make no difference to 'em now. Bodies or no bodies. Dey all heroes!"

Please turn to page 72

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Tales of the South Pacific

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WITH pride in his voice, the Negro went on, "Over here we got de bes' man of 'em all. Dat grave wid de flowers. Me 'n' Denis, we planted dem flowers."

I looked at the garlanded grave. The plots around it were vacant, and the flowers grew in rich profusion, right up to the austere white cross: "Commander Hoag."

"As you kin see," the caretaker said solemnly, "dis here de commander. Commander Hoag hisse'f. Finer man never lived this side o' Heaven. Ever'body says that. You know de commander?"

I replied that I had. The Negro droned on.

"He about de bes' man I met in all de Navy. He kind to ever'body. Always greet you wid a smile. Wasn't afraid of bawlin' you out, neither. I remembers 'specially one time he give me 'n' Denis a bad time. Mighty bad time he give us. Had to do wid de officers' mess. We was mighty mad, at de time. But we got over it. 'N' here he lies. Daid lak de res'.

"Tell me, suh? What we gonna do if men lak de commander is killed all de time? Where we gonna git good men lak him? You 'spect there's men lak him ready to take his job?"

I slipped into Sunday school maxims. "Isn't it pretty true," I asked, "that good men always show up when they're needed? You don't think the SeaBees will fall apart just because Commander Hoag died?"

"Da's mah point!" the Negro cried. "Da's jes mah point! Already we got a new skipper. Sure. But he ain' a good man! Not at all he ain'." The tall Negro looked about him slowly. "Lemme show you jes' what I mean."

He placed his rake among the flowers on Commander Hoag's grave and leaned upon it. We talked across the grave of the fallen leader. Whenever the caretaker mentioned Hoag he would release one hand from the rake and point languidly downward.

"'Bout two month ago we git an officer in de unit dat hated cullud folk. He give us a mighty bad time in de mess hall. One morning I tell him twice we doan' have no eggs. He git very mad. Later in de day Commander Hoag he hear about his yere ruckus. He call us into his office. All us cullud boys. He stand up when we come in.

"'Men,' he say, 'I'm might sorry to hear about what happen dis mornin'. Yo'-all know we doan' act lak dat in de 144th. You men got rights jes' lak ever'one else. I ain't gonna stand by and see 'em abused.'" The Negro pointed at the grave with his thumb. "He was a good man. Where we gonna git good men lak him?"

I repeated my former argument and the Negro disagreed violently.

"No, suh!" he replied. "I cain' believe dat. Dey's only so many good men, and if you uses 'em up, where you gonna git de others? Take de 144th! When Commander Hoag died, who dey put in his place? De officer dat give us black boys all dat trouble. What he say de first day? 'Gonna be some changes here. Ain' gonna take no mo' nonsense Fum a lot of niggers!'

"Da's why me 'n' Denis works up here. He punishin' us! Only he doan' know it, but we laks it up here. Ain' nobody to push us aroun'. Ain' nobody always tellin' us what to do. We is de boss!" He surveyed his lonely acres.

"Up here ever'body is easy to get along wid. Doan' make no difference is you cullud or white. When yo' daid you fo'get all dat stuff." He lifted his rake from Commander Hoag's grave and ambled down the long lines.

"Dat one ova' dere," he said, pointing with his rake to a small white cross at the end of a row, "he git drunk. Run off'n a cliff one night and kill hisse'f. All his own fault. But now he daid. Back home I guess he a big hero. I ken jes' hear his folks sayin' kinda proud and heartbreakin' at de same time, 'Our boy, he died on Konora.' Da's one reason why I likes to work here. Up here dey all heroes. Ain' a mean man in de bunch."

We walked among the fresh graves. Already their brutal outlines were softened by wisps of tender grass. Along the fence yellow flowers were in bloom.

"Dis boy over here what I mean," the caretaker continued, pointing with his rake to a grave undistinguishable from the others. "He quite a man!"

I followed the rake past the graves of two Marine privates and a SeaBee carpenter's mate to an officer's grave. In the cemetery at Hoga Point distinctions end. There are no officers and men. There are only men. This was the grave of First Lt. Joe Cable, USMCR.

A LAZY thumb pointing to the grave, the Negro said, "He got hisse'f into some kind of trouble down south. Had a fight on de boat wid some his own men. Well, dey kep' de fight sort of hushed up. But two nights before we land here, I und'-staud dey was another fight. Dis time de lieutenant he slug another officer.

"De colonel hear about dis one. He furious. Say dey ain' got no right fightin' among deyselves when de Japs so near. De colonel he want to th-ow de lieutenant in de brig right den. But instead he give de young fellow one mo' chance. Say if he pull hisse'f together on de beach, he goin' to forget all about it. What de colonel doan' know is dat de boy, he pretty heartsick. Trouble he got into down south. He pretty well fed up."

The caretaker paused and reflected upon the grave. "Seem lak sometime it's de officers doan' know how to take care of theyselves.

"Well, come de beachhead," he continued. "And dis yere Marine, he about de bes' we got on our side. He go after them Japs plenty tough. Lot of wise guys dat been plaguin' him, dey keep dey big mouf' shut. Finally, he git his. Dey tell me de colonel see him go.

"Some time de colonel come up here and look around. I figger he pretty glad he let de lieutenant outen de brig. But maybe he ain' so glad, neither. Cause if he keep de young man locked up, he be alive now."

The caretaker wandered to the end of the cemetery and shuffled over to the cool mound under the trees. Easing himself down by means of his rake handle, he waited for his partner, Denis, to appear.

I did not join him but stayed among the graves.

Like the Negro I wondered where the men would come from to take Commander Hoag's place. Throughout the Pacific, in Russia, in Africa, and soon on fronts not yet named, good men were dying.

Who would take their place? Who would marry the girls they would have married? Or build the buildings they would have built? Were there men at home ready to do Hoag's job? And Cable's? And Tony Fry's?

I thought of Hoag as I knew him, a man who never buttoned his shirt properly. He was from Atlanta, but he championed the Negro. He was a rich man, but he befriended his meanest enlisted man. He was a gentile, but he placed Jews in positions of command. He was a man tired with responsibility, but he saw to it that others got rest.

Yet when he died a loud-mouthed bully came along to take his place.

IF this newcomer stayed in command much longer, all the patient work Hoag had done would be dissipated. The 144th SeaBees would be unfit to hit another beachhead. Already they were beg-nning to fall apart at the seams. The guiding spirit of their team was dead.

Each man who lay on Hoga Point bore with him to his grave some promise for a free America. Now they were gone. Who would take their places? Women? Old men? Or were those who lived committed to a double burden? Theirs and the dead men's?

From the picket fence I heard a cheerful voice. It was Denis lugging a bucket of cold water. He laughed when he saw me by the graves. "You comin' up to see about 'movin' all dese yere bodies back to the States?" he asked.

"No," I replied. "Are they going to do that?"

"Da's what dey say," Denis laughed, wiping his jet forehead. "Seem lak nonsense to me. If'n I die out here, where I goin' to sleep happier dan wid de men I fought wif? Where I goin' to get a more peaceful dreamin' place dan dis yere spot? Look at dem birds!"

I followed the flight of four dazzling birds as they dipped toward the lagoon.

"I s'pose you been talkin' to de preacher?" Denis inquired.

"Who's that?" I asked, and Denis pointed to his friend under the tree.

"Da's him. Da's de preacher! In Mississippi he call hisse'f a preacher!" He laughed and took the water to his friend. The caretaker took a long drink, and what was left in the cup he swished into the flowers.

"Doan' you mind what Denis say," he whispered to me. "Denis, he quite a cutup. Sometime he run off at de mouf'."

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A Town Like Alice

Continued from page 59

FIRST of all, Jean's letter continued, thank you so very much for telling me what you did about Joe Harman. You've evidently been very nice to him, and, as you know, that's being nice to me. I can't get over what you say about him rushing off to England and spending all that money, just to see me again. But people out here are like that, I think.

And now, about Willstown. I don't know if Joe Harman will still be so keen on marrying me when he sees me; six years is a long time, and people change. I don't know if I'll be keen on marrying him. But if we were to want to marry, what he told you about Willstown is right.

It's just terrible there, Noel. There's nothing for a woman there at all except the washtub.

And yet, Noel, I wouldn't want to see Joe try to make his life anywhere else.

Noel, do you think I could have five thousand pounds of my capital? I'm going to take the advice you always shove at me, and not do anything in a hurry. If when I meet Joe Harman he still wants to marry me, and if I want to marry him, I'm going to wait a bit. I'd like to work in Willstown for a year or so myself before committing myself to live there for ever.

I want to try to start a tiny workshop, making shoes and handbags out of alligator skins. I told you about that in my last letter. I've written a long letter this morning to Mr. Pack to ask him if he would sell for me in England if the stuff is good enough.

And I've asked him to make me out a list of the things I'd want for a workshop employing up to ten girls, and what they cost.

But I'm afraid that's not the whole story. If I'm going to start a workshop for girls, they've got to have something to spend their wages on. I want to start a shop to sell the sort of things that women want.

Not a big shop, just a little one. I want it to be a sort of ice-cream parlor with a few chromium-plated chairs and glass-topped tables. I want to sell fruit there and fresh vegetables, and sweets, and just a few little things like lipstick and powder and face cream and magazines.

I want to do this, Noel. Apart from Joe Harman and me, they're decent people in Willstown, and they've got so very little.

So what I want is five thousand pounds, please, Noel. May I have it if I want to go ahead with this?

Jean.

I got this letter five days later by the airmail, and put it on one side for a couple of days because I never like to take any action in a hurry. After a period of reflection it seemed to me that I would be carrying out the wishes of the late Mr. Douglas Macfadden if I expected myself to see that Jean Paget did not lose her money in this venture, and I rang Mr. Pack, of Pack and Levy Ltd.

I explained the matter in hand, then made an appointment with him for the following Friday, when he expected to be in London on other business.

He came to see me then at my office. He was a small, fat, cheerful man, very much of a works manager. He brought with him a brown paper parcel.

"Afore we start," he said, "these come in this morning." He untied the parcel on my desk and produced a pair of alligator skin shoes. "They're what she made herself at this place, Willstown."

I turned one over. "Are they any good?"

"Depends on how you look at it," he observed. "For selling in the trade they're awful. But if you take them as a pair of shoes made by a typist that hadn't ever made a shoe before, working on her bed with no equipment, well, they're marvellous."

I laid down the shoe and offered him a cigarette. We talked for a quarter of an hour. At the end of that time I asked him, "What do you really think about her proposition, Mr. Pack?"

"I don't think she can do it," he said flatly. "Not the way she's thinking of."

I must say, I was disappointed, but it was as well to have the facts.

"You see," he explained, "she hasn't got the experience. She's a good girl, Mr. Strachan, and she's got a good business head. But she's got no experience of making shoes to sell, and she's got no experience of keeping girls in order 'n making them work for their money."

"I see," I said again.

"I'd like to help her," said the little man "but she'll have to change her ideas a bit. She's on to a good wheeze, if she can put it over. I must say, when I read her letter where it says that she's paying seventy shilling for an alligator skin uncured, you could have knocked me down with a feather."

"What can you suggest to help her?" I asked.

"What I thought was this," he said. "If she could pay the passage of a forewoman out and home, I'd let her have a girl out of my shop, say for the first year. I got a girl that's getting restless—well, a woman she is, thirty-five if she's a day. Aggie Topp, the name is. You wouldn't get girls playing up in any shop with Aggie Topp in charge."

WHAT Mr. Pack had said all seemed very reasonable to me. I asked him, "Does Miss Paget know this young woman?"

"Oh, aye, Jean knows Aggie. And Aggie knows Jean. Matter of fact, Aggie come in yesterday and handed in her notice. I handed it back to her and jollied her along, you know. She does that every two or three months, getting restless, like I said. But I asked her then, how would she like to go out to Australia for a year to work with Miss Paget." He smiled slightly.

"She said she'd go anywhere to get away from standing in a queue for the rations. She'd go out for a year, if Jean wants her. They all liked Jean."

I said, "Can you spare her?"

"She won't stay long, anyway," he said. "I don't want to lose her and perhaps I won't. If she gets a trip out to Australia and sees that other places aren't so good as England, then maybe she'll come back and settle down with us again. Get it out of her system."

We talked about this for a time. For the rest of it, Mr. Pack thought Jean's estimates of capital were on the low side, but not excessively so. "You can't afford much mechanisation in the quality shoe trade," he said. "You got to keep changing the style all the time." He was quite willing to do the selling for her.

"Mind, I don't know if she'll be able to make a go of it upon the prices we can sell at," he said. "I'll tell her what we can buy at, and it's up to her. But I'd like to give this thing a spin, I must say."

I thanked him very sincerely, and he went away. I wrote all this out to Jean Paget by air mail, and I believe Mr. Pack wrote to her by the same mail. She did not get these letters for some days after their arrival, because she had gone down to Rockhampton to look for the girl Elsie Peters, who worked in the shoe factory there.

She found her, and the meeting was a complete fiasco. As soon as Jean broached the subject of a job in the Gulf country, Elsie told her she could save her breath. It might be a good thing, she conceded, to start something in the Gulf country, but not for her. Wild horses would not drag her back again.

Jean came away from the cafe feeling depressed. She had been counting rather heavily on this unknown woman. She was very conscious of her own lack of managerial experience; as the venture became closer difficulties loomed up which had not been quite so obvious at first.

She flew back to Cairns next day and found our letters waiting for her. Her spirits revived again. She remembered the gaunt, stern Aggie very well; if Aggie was prepared to come to Queensland for a year that really was something.

She wrote temporising letters to us, for she would not make her mind up about anything until she had seen Harman. She told me later that the three weeks that she spent in Cairns after she came back from Rockhampton were the worst time of her life.

Each morning she woke up in the cold light of dawn convinced that she was making a colossal fool of herself, that she could never settle down in this outlandish country, that she and Harman would have nothing in common and that it would be much better not to meet him at all. The wise course was to take the next plane down to Sydney and get a cheap passage to England, where she belonged.

By noon some rough Australian kindness from a waitress or the manageress had sown a seed of doubt in the smooth bed of her resolution, that grew like a weed throughout the afternoon.

By evening she knew that if she left that country and that place she would be running away from things that might be well worth having, things that she might never find again her whole life through. So she would go to bed resolved to be patient, and in the morning the whole cycle would start off again.

She knew the name of Harman's ship, of course, from my letters, and she had no difficulty in finding out when it docked at Brisbane.

A few discreet inquiries showed her that he must pass through Cairns to get to Willstown, and convinced her that he would have to wait for several days in Cairns because his ship docked in Brisbane on a Monday and the weekly plane in to the Gulf country left at dawn on Tuesday.

She wrote to him care of the shipping line at Brisbane, and she had some difficulty with that letter. Finally she said,

Dear Joe,

I got a letter from Mr. Strachan telling me that you had been to see him while you were in England, and that you were sorry to have missed me. Funnily enough, I have been in Australia for some weeks, and I will wait at Cairns here so that we can have a talk before you go on to Willstown.

Don't let's talk too much about Malaya when we meet. We both know what happened; let's try to forget about it.

Will you let me know your movements—when you'll be coming up to Cairns?

Yours sincerely,

Jean Paget.

She got a telegram on Tuesday morning to tell her he was staying to see Mrs. Spears, the owner of Midhurst, and he would be flying up to Cairns on Thursday. She went to meet him at the aerodrome, feeling absurdly like a girl of seventeen keeping her first date.

To be continued

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BEDTIME STORY – with the happiest ending ever

THREE MONTHS IN HOSPITAL! What a prospect for an active little eight-year-old. Thank goodness—like all modern hospitals—we had 'DUNLOPILLO' mattresses. It made those hot summer months so much easier—for both of us. It gave Jennie cloud-soft comfort, cool as a sea breeze . . . and not a single bed sore.

VISITING DAY FOR JENNIE . . . and what a story she had to tell. "Daddy," she squeaked, "I've got a real live mattress—it breathes!" We all laughed and I told them how 'DUNLOPILLO' was made up of millions of tiny air cells that "inhaled" fresh, clean air every time Jennie moved.

THAT GAVE THEM THE IDEA. They went straight to the furniture store. "This 'DUNLOPILLO' is revolutionising furnishing," the salesman told them. "Hospitals, hotels, trains, planes, and buses are installing 'DUNLOPILLO' because it's clean . . . no dust germs, or vermin . . . and what's more, you just can't wear it out. 'DUNLOPILLO' lasts a lifetime."

"THAT'S TRUE ECONOMY," said Dad, who likes to keep an eye on the budget. "And imagine the housework it would save me," said mother. "Mattresses that you don't have to turn . . . cushions that spring right back into shape . . . what a joy!" "And," the salesman added, "No more bumpy mattresses and sagging cushions."

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The Fur Coat

Continued from page 9

KEITH stood by the stove where she left him. He heard her in the kitchen preparing the dinner, but he made no move to join her. She was disappointed. Among her foolish, impossible dreams there were some she wanted to come true. The one about him, for instance. The suite of offices with his name on the door: Keith Kramer, Consulting Engineer.

He had grinned indulgently the first time Anita had suggested he start his own business. "You've worked for Laxton Associates five years," she said. "You know the consulting business inside out. You like it. Why not try it on your own?"

She didn't understand, of course. She didn't realise the years and years it had taken Uncle George to make Laxton Associates pay. She had no idea of the capital an enterprise like that involved.

"We have savings," she dreamed. "Not much, of course, but it would help. We could start in a small way and I'd be your secretary. We'd work hard and we'd grow."

"Or fold," he countered.

"Keith, why are you afraid?" she asked him.

He wasn't afraid, just sensible. There was a difference between the caution of fear and the caution of reason.

"Dinner won't be long now," Anita called from the kitchen, "only don't come in. It's a surprise. Have you looked at your letters?"

He looked. There were bills and an engineering journal and something from Gayhart Furs, Michigan Avenue. Who were they, he wondered, tearing it open. And then he saw it was addressed to Anita and he remembered—

He remembered a Miss Giraud carrying the coat over her arm, treading swiftly through the deep pile rug of the shop. "It is stunning, this coat," Miss Giraud said. "It is for someone like Mrs. Kramer, someone young and with a sparkle."

Miss Giraud had slipped the coat over Anita's shoulders and adjusted the red-lined hood on her golden hair. She had stepped away then and looked, while Keith looked too.

He had never seen anyone as lovely as Anita was that moment in that coat. He could see her reflected three times in the mirrors as she whirled to look at herself and then at him.

"You see, it was made for her," Miss Giraud said. "Not just in the way it fits. She has the spirit to wear it."

It was true. There was a sparkle in Anita that matched the sparkling splendor of the coat. It should have belonged to her but it cost seven hundred and fifty dollars.

Anita didn't complain. "Maybe we could raise some little white Alaskan foxes of our own," she said. With that she had dismissed the coat. But now, in his hand Keith held an envelope from Gayhart Furs.

He removed the advertisement it contained and spread it across his knee. "Specially priced at five hundred dollars for the end of the season," he read. And underneath this announcement was a picture of the white coat. Across the corner of the page was written, "I thought you might be interested. M. Giraud."

Five hundred dollars. Keith got up quickly and went to his desk, he pulled out the budget, the household account books, the records of his insurance, his savings, his investments. He was still trying to make them reveal five hundred extra dollars when Anita called him to dinner.

It was obviously a celebration. The table was adorned with the best cloth. Seated across the table from him Anita looked like someone from a fairy tale.

"What's the occasion?" he asked, surprised.

"You built a pilot plant, remember?" she answered.

"But that's hardly a thing you drink to," he objected. Still he drank to it with Anita and marvelled at the special glow in her eyes. The pilot plant had been just part of his job.

"I've told everybody about it," she announced, "the man at the fish shop and the woman at the grocery store and Mr. McCauley, of course, when I bought the wine. Mr. McCauley understands things like that. He has an office, you know, above his little shop. His brother was using it, but his brother is moving out. If we want it for your consulting business—"

REALISING just how much she wanted him to take the office, Keith replied, "Anita, dear, what have I given you in the year of our marriage but disappointments and a budget."

"Keith, it isn't that—"

Something—something he should be able to do for her. "The coat," he said suddenly. "I want you to buy the coat—the white coat with the red-lined hood."

She knew the one. "We can't afford it," she cried. "Remember? You tried to figure—"

"I'll ask for a raise," he decided. "First thing in the morning. You can pay for the coat out of our savings, and I'll pay it back. Sometimes your dreams should come true," he said.

His mood was still with him the next morning. He left the savings account book with Anita, laughing at her fears of spending so much money.

He wasn't worried that it would take almost all his savings to pay for the coat, because, of course, he would get the raise.

Uncle George had specialised in chemical problems too long to tackle another field or even want to. He had left the construction of the pilot plant completely in Keith's hands and Keith had managed it successfully. Uncle George was appreciative.

Keith found his uncle in his office, talking on the telephone. "You bet, I'll tell him," he said, as Keith came in. "He's here right now."

He waved the telephone at Keith. "It's Ferry," he said. "He certainly thinks you're a genius!"

Keith sat down. He could see in his uncle's large ruddy face that he was pleased. Uncle George continued his telephone conversation. "It depends on what you want," he said. "I'd have to know more before I could promise to do it . . ."

Keith took out a cigarette, lit it and crossed the room to the window. Uncle George was pleased. At this moment, perhaps, Anita was setting out to buy the coat. He felt a surge of triumph within him.

"Why all the hurry?" Uncle George was booming into the phone. "All right, then, late this afternoon. Meet me at the Engineers' Club, say about five. We'll talk it over. Fine. Fine."

He rattled the telephone to its resting place and turned to Keith. "Ferry wants to start a dozen new projects at once," he said. "You did a good job for him. For me too."

"I—" Keith hesitated. Now was the time to ask, but he wasn't sure just how to do it.

IT was hard to find the right words, and he didn't want Uncle George to think him ungrateful. "I couldn't have done the job if you hadn't given me the chance," he began.

"Nonsense!" Uncle George bellowed. "A man makes his own chances in his life. I wouldn't have trusted you with the assignment if you hadn't proved you could do it. Sometimes I think you don't realise your own worth."

Keith plunged into the opening. "That's what I came to see you about. I haven't been dissatisfied but—"

"But you want to move on," Uncle George finished for him. "Anita's been hinting at that. And, mind you, I think it's a wise move. If I weren't a selfish man I would have fired you long before this."

"Fired me?" Keith felt strangely weak.

"Laxton Associates is a small firm," Uncle George was saying, "and most of our work is in the chemical line. Not much to hold a mechanical engineer and not much chance for advancement. You ought to be in a job that makes better use of your mechanical genius and demands things of you—big things!"

"I only wanted——" Keith began.

"I've wondered at times if you weren't afraid," Uncle George confessed. "I don't know how I'll get along without you, but I'll do my best."

Anita had used that word, Keith thought. Why did everyone confuse good commonsense with fear?

"I'm glad to see you're not," the older man went on.

"Uncle George, I——" Keith jumped to his feet. "I don't want to leave!"

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The Fur Coat

Continued from page 76

UNCLE GEORGE put an arm around Keith's shoulders. "I understand," he said. "You have a certain loyalty towards me and it's hard to make the break. I know and I appreciate your feelings. But that's the way any big step is taken — with a certain amount of pain. We'll miss you around here," he said.

Keith didn't know how it had happeneo He had gone in to ask for a ra : and had come out without a job.

"Finish up the odds and ends on your desk this week," Uncle George had said. "Then take the vacation we owe you. That will give you time to look around for the job you want."

Keith walked through the hall to his office. Once it had seemed dreary and much too small, but now he could find nothing wrong with it. He sat down at his desk and thought that in another month someone else would be sitting there, and he, Keith, would be unemployed.

And he was afraid. No longer could he deny the charge that Uncle George and Anita had made. They would have to tighten the budget, he thought—draw carefully from savings until he found another job.

But his savings were gone! Anita had taken them to buy the coat. Why was she a child who chased after dreams when he needed a wife who could help him?

He tried to telephone, but there was no answer. He hurried home, but Anita wasn't there. He sat down with pipe and newspaper to wait for her. He leaned back and closed his eyes. Later—much later—Anita's voice woke him.

He sat up and shook his head. Lamplight glowed in the room and darkness shadowed the windows. "I waited for you on the corner," Anita was saying. "Did you come home early?"

He looked in the direction of her voice and saw a vision from his memory—Anita in the white coat. She had pushed the hood back over her shoulders, making a soft red nest for her hair. The coat floated about her like a dancing thing.

"You don't know me, do you?" she teased, "You think I'm a goddess in disguise."

"You are," he answered reverently.

She sat down on the floor at his feet, spreading the coat carefully around her. "I feel as if I had just stepped out of a storybook," she said, caressing the white fur of the sleeve.

"Anita—" His voice was heavy and dull, and the sound of it brought her eyes to his face. "Anita, I didn't get the raise. I don't even have a job any more."

"You mean — ". She touched his arms as though that would help her understand. "You mean Uncle George let you go?"

"He thinks I should have a better job."

"And you don't agree?" she asked

"It isn't a matter of agreeing. I haven't any better job."

"But you could hire yourself," she said eagerly. "There's Mr. McCauley's office."

He got up quickly and crossed the room; he didn't trust himself to speak. Even at a moment like this Anita couldn't be practical. He opened the door of the stove and began to rattle the grate noisily. Above its clatter he heard the dial of the telephone clicking.

"A reservation for seven o'clock," Anita was saying into the phone. "Thank you."

"A reservation for seven?" he repeated, making it a question.

"At the Engineers' Club," she told him happily. "We have to show off our new coat. We have to celebrate!"

She started dancing around the room, the coat whirling about her. She could dance when he had no job. She could celebrate!

He charged into the path of her dance and grabbed her roughly by the shoulders.

"Stop it!" he ordered hoarsely. "Don't you see? You'll have to take back the coat! Or sell it. We've nothing to live on!"

His throat closed around the words. He was hurting her, he knew. His hands loosed their grip and he rubbed the fur of the coat where he had meant to crush it. "I'm sorry, Anita. I didn't mean it."

She touched his face lightly with her fingertips in silent forgiveness. "I chose the Engineers' Club because people know us there," she said. "Strangers might think we had always been glamorous."

People did know them at the Engineers' Club and stopped to speak to them in the lobby. "How well you're looking," they said, staring at Anita. And they meant, of course, how beautiful in your new coat.

In the dining-room, too, eyes turned towards Anita. As she settled the new coat about her shoulders, Keith felt a glow of pride that she was his wife.

ANITA was as gay as he had ever seen her. "Champagne?" she asked. "Shouldn't we have champagne? It's a celebration."

He ordered champagne. He watched the waiter pour it, sparkling, from the bottle. He lifted his glass to Anita's. "What are we celebrating?" he asked, and they laughed together as though nothing had ever been so funny.

Above the sound of his own laughter, Keith heard a familiar voice booming his name. "Keith Kramer! We were just talking about you!"

He turned to see Uncle George bearing down on him. Mr. Ferry was with him. "I'm late for a dinner meeting," Uncle George announced, clapping Keith on the back and reaching for Anita's hand. "Just time to introduce Mr. Ferry to the most beautiful member of our family." He placed Anita's hand in Ferry's and bounced on through the crowded room.

Absently, Ferry shook Anita's hand. He was looking at Keith. "You've left me in a spot," he said.

"Won't you sit down?" Anita invited.

Ferry sat down. He was a small man with large horn-rimmed glasses, which he adjusted now as though to see Keith better. "George refuses to handle the problems I outlined for him," he said. "Claims Laxton Associates will stick to the chemical field now that you've left them. Who are you with?" he asked suddenly.

"I——" Keith swallowed.

"Keith isn't working for anyone," Anita answered easily.

Ferry pulled off his glasses and pointed them at Keith. "Is that right?" he asked.

"Yes, it is," Keith said, looking at Anita. What was it about Anita that had let her answer the question without embarrassment?

Vigorously Ferry massaged the glasses with a pocket handkerchief. Slowly a smile spread over his face. "Well," he said, "you can solve my problems just as well on my payroll as on Laxton's. That is if you'll consider working for me. What do you say?"

"Are you offering me a job?" Keith asked carefully.

"If you'll take it," Ferry answered.

Keith didn't really hear the words Ferry spoke after that. He let them pour over him in a comforting wave. Something about a generous salary, a future with a growing firm, his own department. The words didn't matter. Ferry wanted him. He had a job again.

He felt a smile forming on his lips and he turned quickly to Anita, trying to put into one look all that this meant to him—to her—to their future.

Her eyes did not return his smile of relief. At this moment of his triumph they were disappointed, lustreless. The gay white coat seemed misplaced on her drooping shoulders.

"Anita," he said, reaching for her hand across the table. "Anita——"

"I was thinking of Mr. McCauley's office," she responded dully. "But I guess it wouldn't be wise. It would take too much courage——"

Courage—that was it. That was the spirit of Anita. Courage to dream and make dreams come true. And now, with his fear, he had taken it from her.

He started to speak. But he couldn't put her courage into words; he could only return it in kind. If he could find the courage.

"What do you say?" Ferry asked. "Will you take the job?"

The answer wasn't hard. Keith looked at Anita and the words came as though he had always planned to say them. "I'm sorry, I'll have to refuse. I've found an office and the courage to do what I've always wanted to do. I'm going on my own."

He watched the glow return to Anita's eyes. "Keith Kramer, Consulting Engineer," she said softly.

"If you'd care to give me a contract for the work you want done," Keith said, "I think I could handle it to your satisfaction."

"Fine!" Ferry said. "That's a fine idea!" He rose and Keith rose with him. "Drop by my office Monday and we'll draw up the contract," Ferry said, shaking Keith's hand. "Sounds like a good decision, Kramer. I like to see a young man go after what he wants."

He was gone and the job was gone with him—the salary, the security, everything Keith treasured. Everything except the new, exciting confidence within him and the touch of Anita's hand on his arm. He turned to her there beside him, the beautiful girl leaning back against the bright new coat.

"Keith, do you feel funny now that you've done it?" she asked. "Do you wish you hadn't?"

"I feel wonderful," he said, putting his arm around her. "I feel exactly as you look."

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Wuff, Snuff & Tuff — FOR THE CHILDREN — by TIM

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In-law problems and selfishness wreck marriage

The greatest single contributing factor in the break-up of marriages to-day is the in-law problem, because it has been aggravated by the housing shortage.

Next greatest home-wrecker — probably the greatest at most other periods of the world's history — is selfishness. Mishandled money problems come third.

By KAY MELAUN, staff reporter

ESTRANGEMENT grows between a husband and wife who are not willing to make concessions and reconcile their differing temperaments.

THIS is the considered opinion of a 37-year-old woman doctor and a Sydney solicitor with some 30 years' experience in the divorce court.

The doctor has been married for 13 years and has three children under ten. The solicitor, G. M. Stafford, is a grandfather.

"As a man with long experience of other people's troubles, the best advice I can give to any young married couple is to live at least 200 miles from their parents," says Mr. Stafford.

"Unfortunately, the housing shortage means that when children marry they often set up house in part of the home of one of the parents. And then the trouble starts.

"If there is the slightest difference of opinion between the young couple, the older people are in on it, too. Almost inevitably they side with their own child.

"Soon the son-in-law or daughter-in-law is made to feel the interloper in what has been and could again be a happy set-up. Quite frequently—as my divorce experience has all too bitterly shown me—this kind of thing ends with a mother telling her son-in-law to 'Get out,' the young wife in the background tearfully endorsing the edict.

"On the other hand, many young couples bring rows on themselves by treating the mother they're living with as a cook-general.

"I blame the parents-in-law, mostly, because they're older and should know better. The young haven't much restraint and know little about life, but older people should have learned to 'pull their heads in.'

"It's surprising how quickly they can settle their differences—and find their married happiness—when they're left alone."

Mr. Stafford makes the point that most human beings are selfish, but the average man's lack of consideration for his wife is astonishing.

"With shorter working hours, many men knock off earlier," he says. "Rather than go home, where they might be asked to mind the baby, they spend the time being big fellows in some bar or other.

"If a husband gets home ready for a fight, it doesn't take much to get one with a wife who has spent the day washing and cooking and looking after a child."

Mr. Stafford denies the old saying that it's the woman who makes or breaks the marriage. "After all, marriage can only be described as an attempt to reconcile two very frequently opposing personalities," he says. "Unless each is prepared to give way there'll be trouble."

He claims that the mishandling of money causes more unwarranted matrimonial grief than is generally realised.

"As soon as a couple get married they should work out a budget and stick to it as closely as possible. So much for rent, so much for housekeeping, and so on —with always a bit for the bank.

"So many wives, especially young ones, are so terribly silly with money.

"What often happens, too, is that a husband comes home on a Thursday or Friday and hands over his pay with a grand gesture.

"On Monday he's back borrowing from 'the house.' If there's any quibble about it, he's immediately aggrieved. 'It's my money, isn't it?' he'll demand.

"All this nagging trouble can easily be avoided by a realistic partnership approach to money."

The doctor has a large general practice. She especially blames the mother of the young husband and the father of the young wife for marriage failures.

"It's based on resentment between the two generations, of course," she says.

"Mothers sniff that their sons' wives can't cook or can't manage a household as they can. All too often it's true, of course, but it doesn't help the marriage.

"Or mother-in-law will say: 'I don't see why you have to fuss with these sulpha drugs. When John had bronchitis as a baby, I got him over it by rubbing his chest with camphorated oil. . . .'

"In many cases the young wife's trouble is merely fear—the fear that she has to compete with her husband's mother. Often the fear is quite without foundation.

"Husbands and wives would find it easier to get on with their parents-in-law if they washed all prejudices and preconceived ideas about in-laws out of their heads.

"Fathers-in-law frequently take the attitude that their daughters' husbands are poor fish. What they conceitedly mean is that their sons-in-law aren't a patch on themselves."

This doctor agrees that selfishness—innate male selfishness and the selfishness of the career woman—is the cause of much matrimonial trouble.

"The wife who irritates me is the What's-yours-is-mine-what's-mine's-my-own type. She earns good money and spends it all on herself. She rubs in her hard work to her husband so thoroughly that he can't protest that she takes all his money, too, besides sacrificing his domestic comfort to her own selfishness.

"The most tragic women who come into my surgery are those whose marriages are going on the rocks for lack of what I call loving tenderness from their husbands.

"One woman came to me with 'nerves.' She was about 35 and had recently married a man she had known in girlhood.

"She gave up a well-paid executive job in another State to settle with him in a compact, furnished, city flat.

"Her housework took two hours a day. Although her husband finished work at five, he never came home before 6.30 because he liked to talk shop with his friends at a pub.

"It happened that his idea of taking her to the pictures was to sit with her for 10 minutes then slip off to his sports club. He'd return at 10.30 or so to take her home.

"At concerts he sat beside her—and went to sleep.

"After she had rearranged the furniture three times she suggested getting a job to fill in the time. He told her proudly he didn't want his wife to work.

"I decided that this was one marriage in which I'd take a chance on interfering. I got him to my consulting room and gave him the worst hour of his life.

"He was appalled when I told him that he was the cause of his wife's 'nerves,' and that she was thinking of leaving him. He protested that he loved her deeply. Hadn't he given her everything he could—money and leisure? Didn't she love him?

"I pointed out that his wife had inferred from his neglect that he didn't care two straws about her.

"When I said that she would prefer to battle along on £5 a week if it meant that he came home early to be with her, he thought me mad. But gradually it sank into his head that he had been monumentally selfish.

"He sat meekly while I dinned it into his head that his wife, like the average woman, needed reassurances of affection, the cheapest—and most precious—commodity in the world.

"I don't know how they worked it out, but subsequently I saw them at the pictures. He didn't look sleepy—and I can tell you there was nothing wrong with her nerves!"

Fisherman – 1950 style

Bill Wisby of Hobart has been fishing off the Tasmanian coast for 35 years. Bill says, "When the fish are running we go out after them no matter what the weather. Often that means we're out in freezing winds that blow straight up from the Antarctic. That's when we're glad we have Bonox aboard." Just add hot water to Bonox and you have a rich, piping hot broth that sends concentrated beef surging into your bloodstream. Go after the cold with delicious Bonox — eat it and drink it for a l-i-f-t!

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NP105

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● Wholesome food attractively served is an essential part of the week-end plan for meals, but be clever and spend a minimum of time in the kitchen.

By Our Food and Cookery Experts

EASY Weekend

CRISP GARDEN SALAD, with sliced cold meat, potato salad, and oven-fresh orange gems, makes a quick and easy week-end meal. A meal of this type is appetising, satisfying, and wholesome; it allows the homemaker well-earned relaxation, too.

WHEN planning a relaxed week-end the wise homemaker prepares as much food as possible on Saturday morning. Most of the recipes on this page may be prepared partly or completely in advance.

If orange gems are to be part of the Sunday night menu the mixture may be prepared on Saturday, up to the point where the liquid is added. Finishing the mixture, baking and serving is then a matter of moments.

Remember all spoon measurements are level.

GARDEN SALAD

(Fluted carrot strips, held with a cocktail stick, are a novel touch.)

Lettuce, cress (if available), spring onions or large shallots (or small pickled onions), sliced tomatoes, sliced cucumber (peeled or unpeeled as desired), sliced radishes, fluted carrot strips, thin slices sweet green pepper, French dressing (or mayonnaise if preferred).

Cover platter with crisp lettuce leaves and cress. Make a border of overlapping slices of tomato and cucumber (the latter scored with a fork to improve appearance). Arrange rings of green pepper and fill each one with spring onion or shallot, radish slices, fluted carrot. Garnish with sprigs of cress (or parsley). Serve with French dressing or mayonnaise.

To prepare fluted carrot strips: Cut paper-thin lengthwise slices of carrot with a very sharp knife. Flute as illustrated, secure with cocktail sticks. Drop into iced water until thoroughly chilled and crisp.

ORANGE GEMS

(These are fine as they are; with a few chopped raisins added they are better still.)

One and a half cups plain flour, 4 teaspoons baking powder, pinch salt, 2 tablespoons shortening, 1 dessertspoon grated orange rind, 5 tablespoons sugar, 1 egg, ¾ cup milk.

Sift flour, baking powder, and salt. Rub in shortening, add orange rind and sugar. Separate white from yolk of egg, mix yolk with milk. Fold into mixture, then lastly fold in stiffly beaten egg-white. Three-quarters fill hot, greased gem irons. Bake in hot oven (400deg. F. gas, 450deg. F. electric) approximately 10 minutes.

SATURDAY SPECIAL

(If the weather turns suddenly cool make this from stores on the pantry shelf.)

One 12oz. tin luncheon meat, 1 cup coarsely grated cheese, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley, ¾ cup soft breadcrumbs, 2 eggs, 1 cup milk, small quantity butter, chutney.

Put meat through mincer, pack lightly into well-greased ovenware dish. Sprinkle with cheese, parsley, and breadcrumbs. Beat eggs with milk, pour carefully into dish. Dot top with butter. Bake in moderate oven (350deg. F. gas, 400deg. F. electric) 40 to 45 minutes. Cut into squares for serving, and top each portion with a spoonful of chutney.

QUICK CHOCOLATE CAKE

(A good utility chocolate cake to be eaten plain, made into a layer cake, or iced and cut into blocks.)

Two eggs, ¾ cup sugar, 1 cup self-raising flour, pinch salt, 1oz. butter, 2oz. dark chocolate, ½ cup milk, few drops vanilla.

Beat eggs well, add sugar gradually and beat 5 minutes. Sift flour twice with salt. Melt chocolate and butter in heated milk, add vanilla. Fold into egg mixture alternately with sifted flour. Turn into greased 7in. square tin or two 7in. sandwich-tins. Bake in moderate oven (375deg. F. gas, 425deg. F. electric) 50 to 60 minutes for 1 large cake, 30 to 35 minutes for two sandwich-tins. Allow to stand 5 minutes before turning out of tin. Sandwich may be joined with cream; large cake may be left plain or iced and cut into blocks.

HOME-MADE BEEF BRAWN

(Just the thing for a week-end salad meal; cooked peas or diced cooked carrot, or both, may be added before setting.)

One pound of shin of beef, 2lb. beef bones, water, salt, pepper, 2 thin slices of onion, 3 or 4 sprigs of parsley.

Wash shin and slash meat well; place in large saucepan with well-washed beef bones. Add water to just cover, onion, ½ teaspoon salt, pepper, and parsley. Simmer very gently until meat lifts easily from bones. Strain, reserve stock. Cut all meat from bones, shred finely. Place in large basin with 1½ to 2 cups of the stock. Correct seasoning (and add cooked vegetables if desired). Allow to set overnight. Turn out and serve with salad.

PEAR DELICIOUS

(Home cooked or tinned pears may be used; the sweet is quick, easy, and good.)

Eight cooked pear halves, ½ cup quince or red currant jelly, ¼ cup orange juice, 1 dessertspoon grated orange rind, ice-cream, cherries (and cream if desired) to decorate.

Drain pears free of syrup. Melt quince jelly over very low heat. Add pears, simmer until well glazed, basting frequently. Remove pears, and chill. To remaining jelly syrup add orange juice and rind, and 1 extra tablespoon jelly, mix well; chill. Spoon ice-cream into serving dishes, top with pear half, rounded side up. Spoon jelly sauce over, add whipped cream if used, and decorate with a cherry.

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CUT OUT THIS RECIPE

CHOCOLATE WALNUT LAYER CAKE

Here's a lovely cake that is simple to make—prepared with Bournville Cocoa, the cocoa with the real chocolaty flavour. Insist on Bournville Cocoa—it's the economical way to successful chocolate cooking.

Delicious, and easy to make!

- 8 ozs. S.R. flour
- pinch salt
- 5 ozs. sugar
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnut meats
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped mixed candied peel
- 1 large tablespoon Bournville Cocoa
- 3 ozs. butter or margarine
- ½-¾ cup milk
- 2 eggs
- vanilla

Sift flour, salt and cocoa. Cream butter and sugar. Add well beaten eggs; add flour and milk alternatively and lastly walnuts, candied peel and vanilla. Bake in two 7½ inch layer tins (lined with greased paper), 25-30 minutes in moderate oven (350°F.). Cool on wire tray. When cold fill with nut cream filling and ice with white boiled frosting. Before set, sprinkle with coarsely chopped walnuts.

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DELICIOUS baked apples de luxe —see main prizewinning recipe on this page.

£5 for sweet recipe

● First prize this week goes to a delicious cold sweet recipe, baked apples de luxe.

HONEY, almonds, raisins, and sherry or muscat are the flavorings used in preparing baked apples de luxe. The result is a delicious sweet.

Remember all spoon measurements refer to level spoons.

BAKED APPLES DE LUXE

Four large cooking apples, 4 dessertspoons honey, 1 tablespoon chopped blanched almonds, ½ to ¾ cup chopped raisins, ½ cup hot water, 4 dessertspoons muscat or sherry, whipped sweetened cream, cherries to decorate.

Remove cores from apples, do not pierce blossom end. Peel to within 1 inch of the bottom. Stand upright in 8in. cake-tin, pour 1 dessertpoon honey into each core cavity, and fill to top with nuts and raisins mixed together. Add water, cover apples with greased paper and bake in moderate oven (350deg. F. gas, 400deg. F. electric) 30 minutes. Pour 1 dessertspoon muscat or sherry over each apple, return uncovered to oven and cook further 50 to 60 minutes until apples are tender. Baste frequently during cooking with syrup beneath apples. Serve hot or cold with whipped cream and decorate with cherries.

First Prize of £5 to Mrs. A. H. Pickstone, Dalveen, Sth. Line, Qld.

CURRIED VEGETABLE TOPSY-TURVY

Two dessertspoons butter or other shortening, 1 tablespoon diced onion, 3 dessertspoons flour, 1 dessertspoon curry powder, salt and pepper, ¾ cup milk, ½ cup water, 2 cups diced cooked vegetables (carrot, parsnip, celery, potato, peas), 1 dessertspoon diced parboiled red pepper, 2 bacon rashers, parsley.

Scone Topping: Four ounces self-raising flour, 1 dessertspoon butter or other shortening, ½ teaspoon salt, 2oz. grated cheese, 2-3rds cup milk.

Melt butter or shortening, add diced onion, fry until browned. Add flour, curry powder, salt and pepper, stir until smooth. Cook 2 to 3 minutes. Add milk and water, stir until mixture boils and thickens. Fold in cooked vegetables and red pepper, fill into well-greased 7in. square or round cake-tin.

To Prepare Scone Dough: Rub butter or shortening into sifted flour and salt. Add cheese and mix to stiff dough with milk. Knead lightly on floured board and press out into size and shape of tin. Place on top of vegetable mixture. Bake in hot oven (475deg. F. gas, 525deg. F. electric) 20 to 25 minutes. Invert on to heated serving-dish. Garnish with grilled bacon and parsley.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. E. Pederick, Gawler River, S.A.

CARAMEL TART

Pastry: Six ounces self-raising flour, 2 tablespoons icing-sugar, 3oz. shortening, 1 beaten egg.

Sift flour and icing-sugar, rub in shortening. Mix to a dry dough with beaten egg. Turn on to floured board, knead lightly, roll thinly. Line 7in. tart-plate, prick base with a fork. Bake in moderate oven (375deg. F. gas, 425deg. F. electric) 12 to 15 minutes. Allow to cool.

Filling: Four tablespoons plain flour, 1 cup brown sugar, 2 eggs, 2 cups milk, 2 tablespoons butter, extra ½ cup white sugar.

Mix flour and sugar to a smooth paste with beaten egg-yolks and milk. Stir until boiling. Add butter, fill into pastry-shell. Make meringue with egg-whites and extra sugar, pile on to filling. Return to moderate oven to set and brown meringue.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. Nancy Wayne, 51 Dumbarton Street, North Sydney, N.S.W.

SAVORY ROLLED STEAK

One and a half pounds round steak cut in one piece, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, 4oz. each minced beef and pork, 1 tablespoon chopped onion, 1 tablespoon chopped raisins or sultanas, 1 clove of garlic, 1 dessertspoon chopped pickles, salt, pepper, 2 or 3 hard-boiled eggs, 1 raw egg, 4oz. bacon rashers, stuffed olives.

Trim steak, marinade 10 minutes in lemon juice mixed with soy sauce. Combine beef, pork, onion, raisins, finely chopped garlic, pickles. Season with salt and pepper, bind with beaten egg. Drain steak from marinade, place flat on board. Remove rind from bacon, arrange over surface of steak. Spread meat mixture over, then add a layer of sliced hard-boiled egg. Add a few stuffed olives. Roll steak up firmly, stitch ends and sides with coarse thread; leave a length of thread at both ends to make thread easy to remove after cooking. Wrap roll in cheese cloth and tie with string. Steam or boil 1½ to 2 hours. When cooked remove cloth and brown roll in hot fat. Serve with tomato sauce, or with brown gravy flavored with some of the liquid in which meat was marinaded.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. Hatcher, Mapledurham, Leongatha, South Gippsland, Vic.

Sent by readers

Readers' recipes that win prizes this week are:

- *Baked Apples De Luxe*
- *Curried Topsy Turvy*
- *Caramel Tart*
- *Savory Rolled Steak*

CURRIED VEGETABLE TOPSY-TURVY with peas and extra grilled bacon will be a popular dish for luncheon or high tea. Serve in generous wedges.

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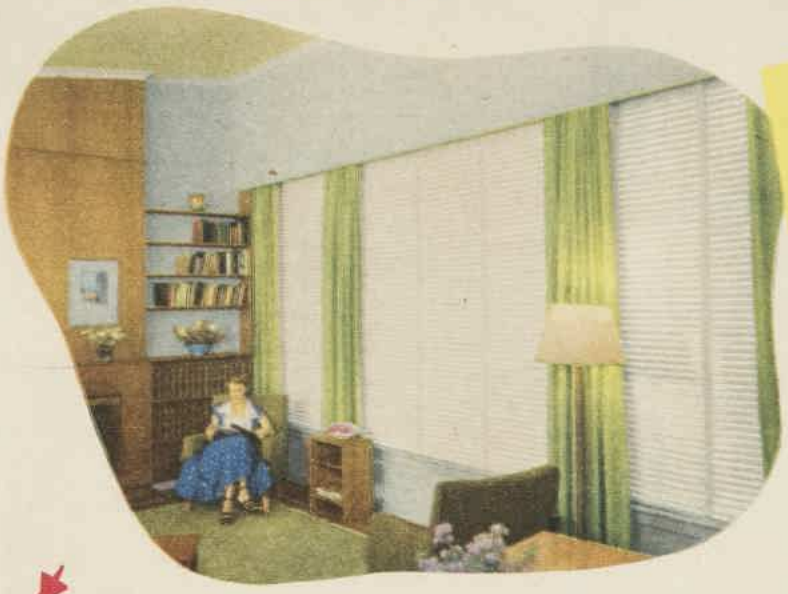

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Gracious living comes with ease in the charm and elegance of rooms fitted with "Aberdeen" (Pat.) All Metal Venetian Blinds. They'll work miracles in *your* home and transform *any* room to new life, loveliness and colour. "Aberdeen" All Metal Venetians blend with every decorative setting and they're ideal for both modern and traditional interiors—the featherweight, plastic finished slats harmonise with any colour scheme.

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Within seven days of placing your order "Aberdeen" Climate Control Blinds will be erected in your home! In either the popular Florentine (throw-out) or straight-drop styles, they're made from plastic stripe ducks that are guaranteed fadeless, waterproof and mildew resistant. You'll be delighted with their exclusive patterns and the perfect ease of operation of the Climate Control fittings. This summer, keep the sun at bay in your home with "Aberdeen" Climate Control Blinds—their price is lower than you'd think possible.

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PLATE has cut flowers as well as seedlings, twigs, trailing ivy, a budding branch. Pickings from a bush walk can set you up as a plate planter.

gardening in miniature

YOU can have all the enchantment of a garden by becoming a plate planter or a backyard sink grower. Here are two plates and a beautiful sink display to give you some ideas.

A meat plate can give you all the thrill of growing primroses, irises, tulips, or daffodils against a budding branch.

Once you have chosen your plate, you can start right away. Place small plants round the rim of the dish in their clumps of soil and group the stones and pebbles of the "landscape" behind them. Cover the soil with moss.

You can arrange violets and daisies so that they peep from behind a stone, or faggot of wood masquerading as a log, and if there are no flowers in your garden plate you can put some cut ones in.

If you mix growing plants and cut flowers, you will need a piece of chicken wire, loosely crumpled, and held down with stones to hold foliage and flowers.

Group cut flowers and foliage as though they are growing. Fill the well of the plate with water, and be careful that the moss does not overhang the edge or it will syphon water on to the table.

If the plate is filled with plants, water as you would ordinary pots, just keeping the soil moist.

MINIATURE garden (below) is interesting, colorful and does not require any heavy work.

SINK GARDEN of 20 rock plants. When buying plants, talk over times of flowering with the seedsman so that you have something in bloom all the year round. Put layer of broken bits of plant pot under soil.

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DRAWING-ROOM: Brick fireplace has delicately wrought 18th century French vases, effectively and safely displayed in glazed-in recesses. Fireside chairs are upholstered in rose satin.

Old-world furniture

MANY of the exquisite old pieces in the home of Mrs. Leslie Turner, Kinellan, Double Bay, came from the Turner family home in Brisbane, which bears the same name.

Photographs on these pages show how lovely some of her prized possessions are.

"You never tire of old pieces," Mrs. Turner says, "they are always beautiful."

Mrs. Leslie Brash, Mrs. Turner's daughter, has a flair for arranging flowers, and sometimes fruit and vegetables, in an unusual way, and her mixed bowls add color to the rooms and contribute to the "lived-in" atmosphere of the house.

The main rooms are big enough to carry the deep brown wallpaper and polished jarrah floors. The drawing-room is perfectly scaled to old-world furniture, including a lacquered globe, rosewood-framed tapestry screen, and beautiful mahogany lounge.

Pictures are all originals, and were selected for each setting.

UNUSUAL BUFFET setting by Mrs. Leslie Brash, daughter of Mrs. Turner, is seen on mahogany table in centre of dining-room. Curtains are striped cinnamon, white, and lime. Room has dignified old-world air.

FIREPLACE influenced Mrs. Turner to furnish this room as a comfortable bed-sitting-room. Drapes and window-seat are in rich green velvet, divan and cushions are covered in oyster-grey satin.

LENGTH of mantelpiece in drawing-room shows to advantage a striking vase of lilies and roses, and Sevres clock, with goblets which stand on either side. Dining-room adjoins, adding to room's spaciousness.

BAY WINDOW of drawing-room has heavy clay velvet drapes, grey velvet window-seat. Dark floors bring out rich tones of Persian rugs.

MOTHERCRAFT

Dressing for comfort

By SISTER MARY JACOB, Our Mothercraft Nurse

CLOTHES for the mother-to-be should be attractive, comfortable, and well-fitting, light in weight, but warm enough to prevent chills. Some support is also required.

Tight waist-bands and garters interfere with the circulation and may cause swelling or cramp.

Maternity corsets are not necessary for women who do not ordinarily wear corsets; but if there appears to be some need for support during the latter part of pregnancy, a simple maternity belt can be made. Instructions for making and adjusting this can be obtained from The Australian Women's Weekly Mothercraft Service Bureau, Scottish House, 19 Bridge Street, Sydney. Send a stamped addressed envelope with the request.

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Fashion PATTERNS

Pattern for beginners

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Beauty's ROSE

By MONICA EWER

The Australian Women's Weekly
Novel . . . September 30, 1950
SUPPLEMENT—must not be sold seperately

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Supplement to The Australian Women's Weekly — September 29, 1956

Beauty's Rose

By MONICA EWER

THE girls were hot and dishevelled now after the dancing that always marked the break up of school for the summer. Miss Hewitt looked over the sea of young faces. In a moment she would say what was always known as "a few words," and then they would file out and she would not see them again for eight weeks.

To Miss Hewitt there was always something rather solemn about this parting. For there were many of the young faces that she would never see again.

Miss Hewitt saw them in a sentimental haze, and for that purpose she fixed her eyes on Loueen Meredith.

The girl had two distinctions. She had a prodigious and parrotlike memory, and she was by common consent "the prettiest girl in the school."

Loueen looked back at Miss Hewitt with interest. Unlike her companions, she quite often listened to what was said. Occasionally grown-ups were illuminating. One had to listen to a lot of twaddle, of course, but sometimes one learnt things that were not to be found in books.

The speech, however, didn't last more than five minutes. In thirty years Miss Hewitt had at least learnt for how long she could expect attention.

At the close the girls gave three cheers for all the teachers with whom they had fought during the term, and filed out to the cloakrooms, chattering like starlings, high and quick, as if life could never be long enough for all they had to say.

"Shan't see you for eight weeks," said one girl to another. It was at the moment the dominant thought.

"Maybe I won't be back next term," said Loueen, suddenly defiant. "I'll be seventeen next month."

"Why, you're only in the fourth." It was the head prefect speaking. "You've lots to learn yet, Loueen."

Loueen shrugged. Several girls nearby giggled awkwardly.

There was much kissing and confusion. Addresses were exchanged. Promises to write. The girls began to drift away in twos and threes to catch the great red buses or dive into the Underground.

Loueen watched them go indifferently. She walked alone along the road, swinging her old tennis shoes by the laces. She thought over the recent conversation. If not school—then what?

At the corner of the street she came to the rambling, shabby, old house with its soot-laden garden. There was a light in her mother's bedroom. She remembered that Anne was going to a dance. Mother would be helping her to dress.

Loueen ran through the kitchen, threw her tennis shoes into the chest in the hall, and made for the bedroom, where she flung herself on the great double bed and watched her mother brushing her elder daughter's hair.

STUDYING her mother's face, Loueen marvelled that it should be so intent over such a simple operation.

"Mother, darling," she protested lazily, "don't be so fierce. You'll give yourself lines."

Loueen knew just how to make her mother relax. "Lines" were a nightmare to Mary Meredith. She went on brushing, but her lips were no longer pressed so hard together.

"Must you, Mother?" protested the victim, but softly, indifferently, rather as a matter of habit. Anne Meredith was thinking of other things.

Her mother nodded her lovely head. "Your face is your only fortune, Anne. But it's a good one—and Loueen's is even better."

"Oh, what's a face?" said Anne impatiently. "Other things are just as important."

Mrs Meredith's philosophy was simple and realist. "No, they're not."

"Course they're not," chimed in Loueen. "Lovely women can have anything in the world."

"Supposing we'd been hideous," said Anne.

Loueen giggled. "We couldn't have been. Mother is—A Beauty—in capital letters."

Mrs. Meredith carried her thirty-eight years remarkably well. She was, as her daughter said, A Beauty. If her looks had a flaw it was that they were too obvious. Nature had not thought up any original combination.

Nature had been lazy and relied on the old pattern, the wide blue eyes, the bright gold hair, the small straight nose, the soft full lips. And with an indolence that was really reprehensible, Nature had repeated the pattern with Mary Meredith's two daughters.

Anne was stepping carefully into a frilly white frock.

"Going to be called for?" asked Loueen.

Anne nodded. An almost imperceptible hesitation and then she said: "Geoffrey Mortlake."

"Geoffrey?" Loueen considered. "Is he the one with the squint?"

"No."

"Oh, I know, he's the one that kept coming last week. He's dull. He never does anything to mark him out from any other young man. I liked the one who used to wear a cloak. How did you get to know this Geoffrey person?"

"I met him at a dance one of the girls from school gave."

A ring at the door suggested that the young man who never did anything distinctive had arrived. Loueen walked downstairs to have another look at him. She saw him only for a moment.

Just a young man like so many others, white tie and tails, brown hair well brushed shining under the bare bulb in the fanlight in the hall, a well-bred voice talking to Anne as if she were grown-up—Anne who was only eighteen last birthday—the two for a moment on the threshold and then they vanished into the street.

Loueen went into the dining-room to find an apple. The room looked bare and ugly. As she came out of the dining-room she heard her father's key in the front door.

"Evening, Father."

He nodded briefly. "Evening."

She followed him into the drawing-room. It was not often that Loueen could find her father alone. She went straight and rather hurriedly to her objective. "Father, school broke up to-day."

He made a noise of indifferent assent, lit a cigarette and opened his evening paper.

"I was thinking," she went on with

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an effort, "wouldn't it be better, Father, if I didn't go back next term?"

He raised his head to look at her. "What's the matter with the school?"

"Nothing. The school's all right. It's just school in itself. It's such a waste of time."

"Indeed?"

He was not going to give her any help. She plunged on with the things she was determined to say. "All that stuff one learns, Father. It doesn't get one anywhere. What's the use of algebra and geometry when all the maths I'll ever do is add up the tradesman's books? What's the good of knowing all about Chaucer's metre when all the reading I'll do will be the daily paper and a novel from the library? Couldn't I have some practical education instead?"

"Of what kind?"

She passed him back the problem. "What would you advise, Father?"

"Oh, no. You started this. You must have a bent—an ability. What is it?"

That was just the trouble. She wasn't sure. But she was saved by her mother's arrival. Mary Meredith came quietly. She had changed into an old but becoming frock of black velvet. Henry Meredith turned with relief to his wife.

"Mother, darling, you look wonderful!" Loueen stood back a pace to take in the picture.

"You run and do your homework, Lou," said Mary Meredith.

It was a formula. Loueen did not stop to explain again that school had broken up and that she had no homework. It was merely a formula of dismissal. She was so used to being sent out of the room that she never gave the matter a second thought.

. . . . . .

It was three in the morning before Anne came home from the dance. Loueen, waking out of a profound sleep, sat up in bed to see Anne staring out of the window at the darkness.

"Hello! Have a good time?"

Anne swung round, her lips parted, her eyes shining. "Loueen!" Her voice was hushed and awestruck. "He loves me."

"Who?" Loueen was still only half awake.

"Geoff." He asked me to marry him.

"Geoff." That was the young man like all the other young men. There didn't seem anything for Anne to be so excited about.

"What did you say?"

"I—I said I would." Anne's voice sounded strangely ecstatic.

Loueen was now fully awake. "You—you said you would! But why? I mean I'm sure he's all right and all that, but getting married! Why? you're only eighteen. It's just an end of everything."

"Don't be absurd." Anne's eyes were shining. "It's a beginning."

She made her announcement over breakfast next morning. There was a glint of triumph in Mary Meredith's blue eyes. Part of her job was completed.

Henry Meredith's reactions were eminently practical. "Your mother and I have to fly over to Paris for the week-end. The young man had better come to see me to-day." It might have been a purely business proposition that was being discussed.

Geoffrey came to luncheon, and Loueen watched him covertly and wondered what there was about this clean, polite, ordinary young man to make the color come and go in Anne's cheeks.

Her father was not asking him any of the right questions, anything about Anne or her future or his care for her happiness. Henry Meredith was talking eagerly about rubber shares. Loueen glanced down the table. Anne looked unearthly, radiant with happiness. Just went to show what love could do. Beyond understanding.

After lunch, when the others had gone out, her mother sat in the drawing-room with Loueen and planned the wedding.

"Anne will look wonderful," she said with quiet satisfaction, and so disposed of the bride. "And you, Lou, shall be the only bridesmaid. What'll you wear? Powder-blue?"

Loueen was not very helpful, but she let her mother talk on about food and frocks and the people they should invite and the church and the flowers and the ceremony. It was all very clear cut and unsentimental.

"When I get back on Monday," said Mrs. Meredith, "we'll have to settle down to it all. Anne won't be any use in her present starry-eyed condition. I'm relying on you, Loueen."

"I don't understand," said Loueen suddenly.

"What?"

"This love business."

Mary Meredith's mind was busy considering how the bridesmaid could be shown to the best advantage. She was potentially more important than the bride. "Oh, love," she said vaguely, and then added in her dry matter-of-fact manner: "Mutual attraction. Don't you worry. It'll come."

"But I don't want it to come."

"Now you're talking like a baby and you'll be seventeen next month. I think you'd look best in blue."

. . . . . .

There was an early start next morning to catch the Paris plane.

After their parents' taxi had moved down the empty street, the girls moved back to the breakfast table for a last cup of coffee.

"When you're married, Anne, I just can't stick around here," said Loueen. "What'll I do?"

"What do you want to do?"

They all said that. If she knew would she be asking them? "I don't know." She propped her chin on her hands. "It would be nice to earn a lot of money."

"What for?"

"Oh, not for anything in particular—just to show you could do it."

"I think that's silly," Anne laid down her cup and got up. "I'm going to wash my hair," she said. "Geoffrey is coming at two. We're going for a drive. What'll you do?"

Loueen looked out at the dusty garden crackling in the dry summer heat. She stretched luxuriously. "I shall do nothing," she said. "I've never before had the courage to do nothing all day long. To-day is just a breathing space. I need it. When mother comes back on Monday she intends to plunge us into the most fevered wedding preparations."

At midday Loueen saw Geoffrey coming up the drive. He had a newspaper in his hand. Love's impatience, she presumed, could not wait till two o'clock.

She heard the soft flurry of Anne's skirts as she ran to the door. Loueen waited tactfully. She would give them five minutes, and then she would go out.

From the hall suddenly came a cry—strange, muffled, and then a sound of sobbing. For a moment Loueen listened incredulous, and then she flung open the door. Anne stood with her face buried in Geoffrey's shoulder. He was bending over her, his head very close to hers, murmuring words of consolation.

Neither noticed Loueen. She stood for a moment, uncertain, and then she picked up the newspaper which Geoffrey had let fall.

It was an early edition, but in the stop press she read: "Paris plane down in flames. Passengers and pilot unrecognisably burned." There followed the list of names.

GEOFFREY Mortlake took charge of affairs during the weeks that followed, and while preserving a becoming gravity he managed to get through a great deal of work.

He and Anne were both anxious for their wedding to take place as soon as possible, and he managed to buy a house at Hampstead, an old house with a garden. He took Anne shopping for the necessities without which they could not start their married life. He found the church, the parson, and the ring. He arranged for the Meredith furniture to be auctioned; and for Loueen to go to a finishing school in Paris.

So three weeks later Anne and Geoffrey were married at the parish church down the road. Old Mrs. Mortlake, Loueen, and Geoffrey's uncle were the only people present.

Anne wore a black coat and skirt and an oyster grey silk blouse. Old Mrs. Mortlake cried. She gave the only sign of emotion. Otherwise everything was very businesslike.

"Would you come back with us, Loueen?" said Mrs. Mortlake in a flat, unenthusiastic voice after the bride and groom had gone off on their honeymoon straight from the church.

"I daren't," said Loueen. "I'd have loved to, but I've a train to catch."

"Ah, yes, the school." Mrs. Mortlake was obviously relieved. "Very sweet wedding under the sad circumstances."

"Very sweet," echoed Loueen dutifully.

"Mustn't stand round in the draughts, you know," said Geoffrey's uncle, and he bundled Mrs. Mortlake into his car.

Loueen walked home alone. It was all over. Already there was a van at the end of the drive to take the few pieces that Anne wished to keep. It hardly seemed possible that the whole setting of one's youth could be utterly destroyed inside a month. Yet it was all over. A new life was beginning.

It had been arranged that Loueen should meet Mademoiselle Rambert, the principal of the school, and some of the other pupils at Victoria, and be chaperoned across to Paris. Geoffrey had arranged it, bought her

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ticket, paid her fees, sent her heavy luggage in advance.

The girls with Mademoiselle Rambert eyed Loueen with respect. They had heard her story, which was interesting, and she was beautiful. By the end of the first week Loueen was once more "the prettiest girl in the school."

From the beginning Loueen had considered that her being "finished" was a mere excuse to give Geoffrey his bride to himself for the first year of marriage. The process filled her with a desperate impatience.

She learnt quickly, easily, indifferently. She also learnt a number of things not included in the curriculum. She learnt to smoke and mix a cocktail; how to attract a man's glance and how to evade it; she learnt how to lie about things that did not greatly matter.

Anne wrote regularly once a week. At Hampstead everything was idyllic. Anne was expecting a baby.

In the little community of the school there was only one person who fired Loueen's imagination, and that was Mademoiselle Delorme. She was the owner of this profitable establishment catering so selectly for the English.

Mademoiselle Delorme was sixty, a plain woman, whose thin, sallow face was enlivened by a pair of bird bright eyes. Loueen suspected that Mademoiselle Delorme had no illusions about her school. What she gave her pupils would not in any way fit them for the modern world. A little unassimilated culture and some lessons in pre-war etiquette.

All the same Loueen admired her. She had found a grand racket and she had made it into a respectable business. She wondered if Mademoiselle had been a poor relation and the school was a symbol of revolt.

And suddenly the year was over and Mademoiselle was holding her hand at parting and the bright bird eyes were watching her closely.

"With a face like that, ma petite, you will make a very good match." The thin lips twitched into the shadow of a smile. "Unless, of course, you fall in love. But I do not think you will do that. The English are very cold. What is it you want to do with your life?"

A faint frown shadowed Loueen's face. Her hands drew a circle in the air. "I don't quite know—I want an adventure—a constructive adventure—like yours."

"That," said Mademoiselle dryly, "would be a great waste of your good looks. Besides business——" She shook her head. "In the world of artistic creation there may be agonies, tears, temperaments, but there are also ecstasies. In the world of business it is all grind and no glamour. No, my child, the really clever woman finds a man to support her."

Loueen smiled. "Perhaps I'm just not clever enough. I have a taste for independence."

"Then perhaps you are right, perhaps it is better that you should not marry, but," she added regretfully, "it is a great waste that you should be so pink and white. Let me know what happens."

On coming home Loueen found that the house in Hampstead was beautiful. It was a revelation. It had called forth in Anne a species of genius.

Anne had lavished a wealth of personal affection on every piece. They were polished and patted, they had their histories. China, glass, and silver were not merely utilitarian. They were part of a picture which Anne painted with loving attention to detail.

The baby, of course, was an angel. It crooned unintelligibly, and occasionally it cried at night. Its Aunt Loueen confined herself to giving it an odd peck.

"Isn't she an angel?" demanded Anne over and over.

One day, caught off her guard, Loueen's assent was mechanical.

Anne, with the baby in her arms, raised startled blue eyes to her sister's face.

"Why, Lou, I don't believe you care a thing about her."

"I don't believe I do, Anne. Isn't it awful?"

But Anne's placidity was only momentarily ruffled. "It's all right. You'll care enough when you have one of your own."

"I don't think I'll ever take the risk of marrying, because it would be so awkward if you were wrong!"

To Loueen this was all just another trap. She had no place in this idyllic marriage.

So she looked with hardly any curiosity at Anne's plump young friend, Elvira Fuller, when she came to tea, even though Elvira greeted her with frank admiration.

"She's lovely, Anne. Why she's even lovelier than you are."

Loueen interrupted. "Yes, but I've got a horrid nature."

"I wish you'd talk to her, Elvira. You're getting married and this is the second time—so you must think it's some use. Loueen is so tiresome about it."

"Marriage! It's frightful!" Then Elvira launched out into a long account of her prospective wedding, while Anne poured tea and Loueen passed the cakes and gave the speaker only half her attention.

"And your absurd business, darling?" asked Anne, as love's story drew to a close.

LOUEEN sat up. So this silly, plump creature had a business. Now what kind of business could she run?

"It's a white elephant," said Elvira. "I've got another two months' tenancy on the room. I can't sell the goodwill because what does it amount to—half a dozen of my own friends. I thought I'd give away the remains of the stock and write the whole thing off as a loss. Unless you can think of anyone to take it off my hands."

Loueen found that her breath was coming very fast and that she was conscious of her own heart beats.

"What kind of a business is it?"

Elvira's plump, good-natured face wrinkled into smiles.

"It's a beauty parlor. I can't think what induced me to go in for it. But it was one of those times when I was at a loose end and I thought my heart was broken." For a moment she swung disconcertingly round to Anne. "You know, it was when Bobbie married Grace."

She swung back to Loueen. "And then I knew Ianthe—she used to be Bess Conroy—sort of connection—she offered to teach me the rudiments for nothing and I swept along. My dear, it was too boring."

Loueen heard herself staying. "I wonder if you'd let me take on the end of your lease."

She felt rather than heard Anne gasp.

Elvira was immediately enthusiastic. "But why not? If you like that kind of thing. And she's got just the face, hasn't she Anne? I mean if you told me she slept in candle grease I'd rush out and try it. Of course I mustn't deceive you because you are Anne's sister and this is her house and her tea and everything."

She smiled, then rushed on, "It's frightfully boring. You sit there all day and no one comes, and nothing happens, and when they do come they're always your own friends or your relations and they never pay. And anyway they're all women."

"But, Loueen," protested Anne, when Elvira at last paused for breath, "you don't know a thing about it."

"That's all right." Elvira swept objections aside. "I'll introduce her to Ianthe. She'll give her all she needs to know. And as for the preparations, they're made up at the factory and packed and labelled with your name and all you have to do is sell them."

Anne was bewildered. "But, Loueen, you're not serious."

To Elvira, however, the whole thing was already settled. "Anyway, meet me there to-morrow. Here's the address. Bond Street. We all must be round Bond Street. Let's say eleven. It's a dump, my dear. At the back. And costs the earth. Still, you come and see." She made an extravagant gesture. "It's all life, isn't it?"

She left, gay and affectionate and just a little too plump.

"I think you're mad, Lou," said Anne, closing the door and leading the way back into the drawing-room.

"I think so, too, but two months can't kill me."

"But what's the point?"

She couldn't very well explain that the point was to make a life of her own, right away from Anne's interests. "I don't know," she said. "Might be fun."

"How can it be fun?" wailed Anne. "Elvira told you it was deadly."

"Well, anyway, I'll go and see the place," said Loueen.

. . . . . .

Loueen walked down Bond Street the following morning with a sense of excitement. It seemed almost the first time that she had taken a step on her own. Doubtless a very silly step, but definitely her own.

But Elvira had certainly not exaggerated when she had said that the beauty parlor was a dull back room. It was up two flights of stairs, narrow stairs, past a chiropodist, and a milliner, and a door which mysteriously announced itself as Private.

Loueen found Elvira in a dark corner of the little room. The light side was reserved for the client's couch. Elvira was emptying a desk, and for a moment the amazing litter distracted the eye from the cramped

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surroundings and the view of chimney pots beyond the windows.

"Delighted you've come." Elvira waved a bill by way of greeting. "All this getting married, you know, it's almost too much trouble."

Louesn had time to notice now how the flimsy little curtains had faded and that the pink carpet was full of grease spots.

"Can I help?" she asked.

"I'm long past help." Elvira shoved aside the bills and got up. "Isn't it a hole?" she said cheerfully.

"Oh, no. It's—it's very cosy," said Louesn politely.

"Liar. It's ghastly. Pink! Must have pink, it flatters the complexion. They come in here with faces like horses and expect to go out looking like Venus. It can't be done, you know. But let me show you."

IN a breathless, cheerful confusion Elvira took Louesn on a vocal tour of the room. Then without further ado she rang up to arrange for Louesn to have lessons from Ianthe and an appointment was made for the next day at a guinea for half an hour.

"She doesn't mind other people setting up in business," Elvira explained. "She says they all fail, that anyway she can't stop 'em, and so she may as well have their money."

Then she began to rattle off information about beauty culture, until Louesn grew dismayed.

"I do hope I shall be able to learn in the time," she said.

"If you care so much, go to night classes as well as learning from Ianthe. There are some quite near and I've got a card somewhere." Elvira fished in the grubby recesses of the desk.

"You've been so kind," murmured Louesn.

"No. I haven't. I've just handed you the baby—and it's the kind of baby not even a mother could love."

. . . . . .

At five to eleven next morning Louesn leant across a counter of chromium and glass and saw herself reflected in a dozen mirrors.

"Madame Ianthe, please," she said to the girl.

"Have you an appointment, Madame?"

"Yes—the name is Meredith."

"One moment." The girl disappeared into an inner office.

Louesn looked around the shop and saw herself multiplied down endless vistas of glass. Clients coming in before treatment saw their every facial blemish down the long corridors of reflection, and going out after treatment would see every beauty magnified and multiplied.

The girl came back behind the counter and accompanied Louesn ceremoniously to the lift and she was taken up two stories.

"To the left, Madame, up those steps, and along the corridor to a room marked forty-three."

"Thank you."

The lift vanished. Louesn moved softly in the direction indicated. Up half a dozen stairs she walked lightly, afraid of the sound of her feet on the worn cord carpet. Along the corridor half a dozen closed doors. And then there came a sound of voices quite clear and angry from the closed door of Room forty-three.

Louesn stood still a moment to listen. It was a woman's voice, tired and strained and husky, as if the argument had been going on for a long time. It was an elderly voice, low and pleasant.

"I won't have it." Definitely a touch of drama. Louesn could imagine the appropriate gestures. Under it all the woman was enjoying the scene. "It's my business and *I run* it as I please. I won't stand it any longer."

The man's voice was low and emotionless. "Very well. We'll end our association."

"Find someone else to bully, someone else to exploit." There was a note of hysteria now.

"I shall," he said distinctly.

Louesn knew that she ought to go away. One didn't listen at doors. Certainly she ought to go away. But she didn't. She wanted to know what they would say next.

"You've made money," the man said.

"Yes." The woman's voice was quiet now. "Money. You never think of anything else."

"Very seldom. Without me you won't go any higher."

"I'm too tired to care."

Louesn tiptoed away. She seemed to have come at the wrong moment. But it was exciting. She had eavesdropped shamelessly and enjoyed the result. She wondered what had brought about the quarrel.

She crept down the half-dozen stairs, then walked up again, but this time loudly, planting her little feet noisily on every step. She hurried along the corridor and rapped sharply.

"Come in."

For a moment Louesn stood in the doorway and found herself facing a tall, thin man, with an eager face, an olive skin and bright dark eyes that looked at her with frank curiosity.

"Why, it's Miss Meredith, I suppose."

Louesn turned to the woman who spoke. A woman of fifty, with titian hair and a smooth white face. The mouth was large and strong and humorous and there was a glitter of amusement behind the eyes veiled in artificial lashes. She was very tall, and wore a long flowing frock of emerald green.

"How do you do?" said Louesn, and felt the greeting to be inadequate. Period language was what one should use to this imposing and dramatic figure. "It's so kind of you to help me."

"Let me introduce you—Mr Harcourt Power—my—my former manager." For a moment the brown eyes were wicked. "Miss Meredith is taking Elvira's place, Harcourt. Isn't that so?"

"Yes," Louesn said softly.

"Elvira's place. Good lord!" said the man.

"Elvira is going to be married," said Ianthe softly, exactly as if he had not spoken. "So wise, I think. An interesting change from business."

"Elvira's wasn't a business," said Harcourt Power crisply.

"Perhaps it could be built up?" ventured Louesn.

"In that hole? Nonsense!"

Harcourt always says what he thinks." Ianthe's voice was silky. "Such a mistake."

There was a knock on the door. "There's a messenger boy below, Mr Power," said one of the girls. "From the printer's."

"The new folders. I'll be down." He stopped a moment and looked at Louesn a searching impersonal look. "I'll be seeing you again," he said.

Ianthe laughed a little throatily. "Good raw material." She turned now herself and stared at Louesn as if she were a lay figure. "I'm not sure," she said. "Might make the customers dissatisfied. Imagine any of the old ones seeing that child reflected in the glass over their shoulder. Mightn't it make them give up the struggle?"

Harcourt waved a showman's hand in Louesn's direction. "Use our preparations—she does."

Ianthe shook her head. "I wouldn't risk it in my shop. Comparisons—"

Harcourt looked more closely at Louesn. "No make up!" he said.

"Exactly. And when we can't get the same effect the clients might think it was because our hands lacked cunning." Ianthe turned to Louesn. "You don't mind us, do you? You see *we* look at faces impersonally—they're part of our business."

"I'm burningly interested," said Louesn. "You see all I've got in the world is a face. I want to exploit it."

"You can," said Harcourt decisively.

She raised her blue eyes to his and her glance was direct and anxious. "Do you honestly think so?" She waited breathlessly for his answer.

"I do," he said. "Now I must go and see those folders. Good-bye."

The door closed behind him and Louesn heard his quick steps down the corridor.

For a moment Ianthe measured the girl who stood before her. She remembered her own youth, so tempestuous, so difficult. She remembered her long struggle to reach her present high position of insecurity.

"Why do you want to do this?" she asked.

Louesn curbed her impatience. "I—I don't quite know," she said untruthfully.

"How old are you, child."

"Eighteen."

Eighteen. Ianthe remembered. That was the age of moonlight and kisses—an age from which Ianthe had never quite recovered.

"Why don't you go away and marry a good man—or even one who isn't so good?"

"I may do that too—some day," said Louesn, who wished that Ianthe would stop these personalities and get on with the job.

"Then why waste life with this?"

Everyone seemed to think they had the right to ask Louesn questions. "Why did you start, Madame?" she ventured in reply.

"It is so long ago. I've almost forgotten," said Ianthe, who remembered perfectly every step in her laborious rise to Bond Street, a progress only interrupted by her affairs of the heart. "I was a pioneer," she said. "I began in a back room." She gave a little reminiscent laugh.

"It took a lot of money?" Louesn asked.

"Not so much as it does to-day." Ianthe waved Louesn into a chair. "You know it's ridiculous trying to learn this thing in six lessons. Absurd! Criminal! If an inspector calls you'll probably end up in gaol. Six lessons, why I haven't mastered it in sixteen years."

"I quite realise it's ridiculous," said Louesn doggedly. "Maybe I'll never have a client. It's just in case."

"Well, in that case——" Ianthe

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shrugged indifferent shoulders. People came to her for all sorts of absurd reasons. What did she care? "Let's get on with it."

Her cool capable hands were laid on Loueen's face. She was talking quickly now, telling her the names of the bones, showing her where the nerves and the arteries ran, a first lesson in anatomy. Then she massaged her, showing how the fingers should work, how much pressure to exert, and the direction of the movement.

"It's easy to tell you what to do. It's the practice that counts. Go home and try it on the family."

At parting she gave Loueen a simple class book on the anatomy of the face. "Learn the patter. It impresses the customers. To-morrow you'll have to do the work yourself."

"I'll try my hardest." The blue eyes were grave.

Ianthe revised her opinion that here was another society girl playing at making money.

Downstairs in the shop it was Harcourt Power who opened the door for her.

"How did you get on?" he asked, and she found that he was walking down the street beside her.

"Well, I'm a bit bemused. I never knew I had so many bones in my face."

He was studying her profile. "Why do you want to do this?" he asked suddenly.

This same question! Loueen answered: "I hadn't many alternatives. I thought it might be a jumping off place. I thought it might be the still small voice of opportunity. I want to capitalise my face. I feed the thing four times a day. I do think it ought to pull its weight."

He nodded. "It should. But not at Elvira's. No, that's useless."

"Then what would you advise?" she asked. "What ought I to do?"

"I'm thinking."

They were very nearly there now. "Let me know if you find a solution," she said as she stopped before Elvira's salon.

"I'll see you to-morrow. Good-bye."

He raised his hat the merest fraction and turned quickly and went on walking in the same purposeful way. Loueen watched him out of sight.

She told Elvira all about her morning's work, all about everything, except the one thing that mattered—Harcourt Power.

For Loueen saw in him the only person who might help her.

"SO you came?" said Ianthe when Loueen presented herself next morning.

"Did you honestly think I wouldn't?"

"I just hoped." Ianthe dismissed the personal aspect. "To-day you'd better master the rudiments of make-up."

When the lesson was over Loueen met Harcourt Power in the corridor as she walked towards the lift. She would have been disappointed if he had not been there. She knew that the meeting was not accidental. The look he gave her was cool and impersonal and appraising.

"How did the lesson go?"

"Make-up. Lead me to your grandmother and I'll make her look like Helen of Troy."

He shook his head. "You must never think your work is funny. You must think it is a mission. You must be the angel of mercy to the plain."

"I couldn't think like that," she said. "It's not in my nature."

"You'll learn," he said curtly, and nodded and walked on.

After her lesson next day she found Harcourt Power waiting. He slipped his hand under her arm for a moment and headed her towards Piccadilly.

"You're lunching with me," he said.

He guided her into a restaurant, secured them a corner table, took the menu out of her hand, ordered a meal quickly and decisively and without consulting her, ordered the drinks, and then looked at her in triumph over his glass.

"That's that. Now we can talk sense. Tell me what you want to make you take up this venture?"

"Money," she said.

He nodded. That was something he could understand. "I like money too," he said.

"Why?"

"I was brought up to like it. I lived with my uncle. Grand man. Spent like a prince and had all the fun in the world."

"And then?" prompted Loueen.

Harcourt Power laughed shortly. "And then—I imagined it would come to me. It didn't. All I got was a note saying—'You won't enjoy it unless you make it yourself. Do as I did.'"

"I see. So you're doing?"

"Exactly. If you want your child to make money give him a taste of it when young—let him form expensive habits, then he won't be able to rest till they're satisfied. As for me, I'm scheduled to retire at forty. It can be done if—" He was looking at her now, curiously, intently. "If my investments are lucky."

"Like Ianthe?"

"Exactly."

"I see."

She saw very well indeed. If only she could induce him to believe in her as a money-making proposition then her future would be assured.

"You think Elvira's place hopeless?" she asked.

"Quite."

She waited a moment in silence, hoping that he might say something constructive, but he went on unconcernedly with his food.

"I don't think Elvira was a very good manager," she said tentatively. "Perhaps in other hands——"

"Make no difference. These small businesses never pay. What you've got to do is raise a couple of thousand and make a *splash*."

"I can't raise the money," she protested.

"Then good-bye dreams."

"I won't take your word about Elvira's place."

"You'd better. I'm always right."

"What nonsense."

"If you ever get to know me better you'll find it's true. Ask Ianthe."

"Well, I'm going to try, and maybe you'll be surprised."

He laughed. "I should be dumbfounded!"

It was as if he had damped down the fires of her spirit. For the rest of the time they talked of indifferent and impersonal matters.

Loueen went home with her mind seething with new impressions. There was something infectious about Harcourt Power's greedy appetite for life, something challenging in his superiority. She had now an additional reason for wanting success. She must succeed if only to show Harcourt Power.

In the next lessons Loueen felt that she really did learn a great deal, and she came in optimistic mood to take over at Bond Street.

IT was an exciting moment when Elvira and her suitcases went down the stairs. Loueen turned back, very slowly closed the door, and surveyed her kingdom. It was a very little kingdom, but she considered it now, item by item, dwelling on each piece of furniture to make sure that it was disposed to the best advantage.

A knock at the door sent heart into her mouth, but it was only the postman with a circular addressed to Elvira.

Loueen came back into the room and wondered what to do next. She took out a selection of jars and bottles and arranged them, as she had been taught, on the trolly. They would see that she was all ready for work.

The morning dragged slowly on. Somewhere a clock struck one. It occurred to her that she was getting hungry. She had forgotten to ask Elvira what she did about lunch. Loueen scribbled a note that said "Back at 1.30" and pinned in on the door.

In a nearby tea shop she had sandwiches and coffee. It struck her for the first time how careful she would have to be with her money.

As she walked back she looked at the people passing in the street. Somehow or other they had to be lured up those steep dark stairs into the faded pink room at the back of the house. Yet how? She couldn't stand out at the street corner and cry her dubious wares. She couldn't afford to advertise.

She let herself into the salon with a feeling that something must have happened while she was away. But everything was just as she had left it.

The afternoon passed more slowly than the morning. At three o'clock a travelle; called and tried to sell her a new kind of carpet sweeper. At four o'clock she had a moment's wild hopeful flutter. A well-dressed young woman stood in the doorway.

"Mrs. Fuller not here?" she asked.

"No, I've taken over the business," said Loueen with her most dazzling smile. "Did you want an appointment?"

"No. I was passing. I just dropped in to remind Elvira of my cocktail party. It doesn't matter. Thanks awfully. Good-bye."

Once the telephone went, and it was a wrong number.

Time had never moved more slowly. Loueen grew familiar with every inch of the room, with every patch on the wall-paper, and with the pattern on the carpet. At five o'clock she locked the door. It was the first day's defeat.

But she wasn't beaten. She went to the address that Elvira had given her

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and signed on to take two classes a week in beauty culture for a very modest sum. It gave her the feeling that the day had not been entirely wasted.

Yet the days that followed were one as uneventful as the other. Anne was the only real visitor. She came down the next morning and immediately condemned the whole affair.

"Darling, Elvira was right. What a dreadful hole! What a ghastly pink! What a morbid outlook! What decrepit furniture!"

"Oh, I don't know." Loueen was coming more and more to feel that she must defend Elvira's defunct business and Elvira's old furniture and even Elvira's pink curtains. "It's not the decor that matters—it's the massage."

Anne giggled. "That's a good line. And what a massage they'd get from you! Now, darling, let's go away and have a lot of lunch and I want to buy a hat and—"

"I can't go," said Loueen. "I'm on duty."

"Don't be absurd, my pet. No one will come. And if they did what on earth would you do with them? Much better be discreetly out."

"You don't understand," said Loueen patiently. "I'm going to stick this out for two months. I'm going to be here even if no one comes."

"I give you a week," said Anne.

"Right you are, darling. Now run along and I'll stay here and do my burning deck act."

Anne sighed. "And I always thought you were so sensible."

Loueen was somehow glad when Anne was gone. Anne reduced the whole adventure to such an amateurish piece of nonsense.

No one else came all that day, and that evening Loueen attended her first class and began to learn the business from the beginning. The other students looked sideways at Loueen, and once more she was voted "The prettiest girl in the school."

It took all Loueen's courage a one empty day followed another. It took all her determination to get up every morning at half past seven in order to be ready for non-existent clients at nine. It took all her fortitude to face that dull back room for eight hours a day.

And every day she expected that Harcourt Power would reappear. Surely he must come back if only to discover whether he had been right—to discover, she had to admit, that he had been right.

The evenings that she did not go to classes she went out with Geoffrey and Anne, and she went in a new spirit. She went as an advertisement for Elvira's Salon. Only she could hardly ever get her story in first.

She wanted to be able to say casually to these well-to-do young women: "Oh yes, I run a beauty parlor," and then perhaps they would look at her and find her lovely and come along and try for themselves.

But nine evenings out of ten Geoffrey or Anne would say: "What do you think Lou's doing? She's taken over Elvira's old beauty dump. Of course she doesn't know a thing about it. Wouldn't it be frightful if a client blew in by mistake?"

After that there would be lots of fun about beauty parlors in general and her beauty parlor in particular, and Anne would tell about the pink curtains, and Geoffrey would say that he might be old-fashioned but that he didn't believe in women in business, and Loueen's evening would have been completely wasted.

It took more and more courage as the days went on to face that empty back room, to sit and wait while the ugly little clock on the mantelpiece ticked away the slow-moving minutes. And as the days passed Loueen grew frightened. Supposing Harcourt never came again?

Supposing once he had ascertained that she couldn't raise any capital he was no longer interested?

Perhaps she had mishandled the affair. Perhaps she should have temporised instead of begin so downright—perhaps—perhaps—

The only thing that the post brought was a card from Elvira honeymooning at Capri.

"Grottoes here are blue. I bet you are too. Only flaw in honeymoon is realisation of your martyrdom. Love. Elvira."

It was when she had almost given up hope that Harcourt Power reappeared. He came in one day, quite casually, and looked around him with a grin, but she had a feeling that the bright black eyes missed nothing.

"How's business?" He sat on one of the upright chairs, offered her a cigarette and lit one for himself.

"We have everything in the salon—except customers."

"Was I right?"

She nodded a reluctant head. "So far you've been right."

"And where do we go from here?"

A faint hope stirred that he might make some suggestion. "I haven't the least idea," she said.

"A month more?"

"Yes. I've been going to night classes."

"That's sensible. And then?"

"Then—I come to a blank wall."

"Doesn't anybody come in?" he asked. "Or is it that they look at you and don't like you?"

She laughed. "They just don't come. I'm out half an hour every day for lunch. Otherwise I hold the fort faithfully. They just don't come. Oh, I did sell a box of powder to one of Elvira's friends."

"Well, there's no denying you're dogged."

"Of course I am. I'm not beaten yet."

"I must say I can't see much point to it. Honestly, can you?"

"I don't know. At first I thought I did. I felt a bit heroic. But I realise that there's a point when the boy should come off the burning deck."

"We can't command our fates," he said softly, "but it's a thing always worth trying." He got up to go.

"It was nice of you to come."

He shook his head. "Not niceness. Sheer curiosity."

And he was gone, and she was no nearer her objective. She felt further off than ever. For now she could no longer feel that if only Harcourt Power would appear in some mysterious way all her troubles would be over. She went on now simply because there was nothing else to do, but the spark of excitement which had made it all bearable was extinguished.

He came again three days later. "I was just passing," he said. "How's the industrious apprentice? I had hoped to find you at work."

"No faces to-day," she said.

He stayed a little longer, chatting idly, and then he went away. Just a friendly call. If he had ever been opportunity he seemed to have forgotten it. Just a friendly call. But was it? She was somehow not surprised when he came at the end of the week.

"I came deliberately this time," he said.

"You're very welcome. I believe they've added a few hours to the day recently. I never knew that nine to five could be such a long time."

He did not speak for a moment, then he dropped his bombshell so quietly that it almost failed to explode. "We're going into partnership," he said.

"What?" She simply could not believe that she had heard aright.

"You're going to find the capital."

So that was the snag. They were back there again. "I can't."

"Don't interrupt. I'll show you how. I'm going to find the premises. We're going to do the thing properly. I'll build you up. I won't take a salary. I'll take forty per cent of the profits. It will be your business bought with your money—"

"But I haven't any money."

"I know. I also know where you can borrow it on the strength of my reputation."

"But I can't take this risk."

"Listen, don't be a little fool. I'm making you a very advantageous proposition. With me behind you, you'll be all right."

"How do I know that?"

"Ask Ianthe. I built her up in the same way. Ask any one in the business."

"Then why aren't you with them still. Ianthe said she wouldn't have you back."

"Because once they can stand on their own feet they don't like my forty per cent. They think they can do without me. Afterwards they find out their mistake."

It seemed now that opportunity was knocking very loud indeed, so loud that it left her confused and she could hardly hear her own thoughts.

He was talking steadily outlining the future, his voice full and glowing, his dark eyes very bright, his hands moving eagerly. His vitality seemed something almost tangible.

Loueen felt mesmerised. She knew nothing that she could set up against this eager eloquence, nothing that would not be washed away in the flood of his words. He made success sound so easy, such child's play.

"You talk people into things," she said as he paused for breath.

"Yes, but afterwards they are glad."

She got up and stood gravely before him. Their eyes met and they measured each other.

"Are you opportunity—or a devil sent to tempt me."

"I'm both. Opportunity is often the devil." He laughed. "You're got to

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seize him by the horns like the bull. Isn't that so?"

He waited a second for her answer. She dropped her eyelids in a gesture which he took to mean assent, because now he was talking quickly again.

"Listen, I've got to find us the right place. You just sit still and do nothing—say nothing. I'll come back—a day—a week—I don't know." He patted her arm. "Do nothing. Just keep your nose out of mischief. It's your contribution to our partnership."

He nodded and turned on his heel.

Next morning Loueen went to work as a girl going to a tryst with a sweetheart. To-day, to-morrow, any time now, the idea might take practical shape. But the days slipped by and nothing more happened. Elvira's salon was empty as before and Harcourt Power did not telephone.

Then, one day, the telephone shrilled into the silence of Elvira's pink salon and it was Harcourt Power.

"Meet me right away, at the corner," he said.

For once the business was deserted during working hours. Loueen grabbed her hat and coat and raced to the appointment.

She found Harcourt Power and a stranger standing before an empty shop. Harcourt nodded by way of introduction.

"Mr. Ring, the estate agent—Miss Meredith, my partner."

Somehow Mr. Ring faded out of the picture and a moment later Harcourt was unlocking the front door of the shop.

As in a dream, Loueen heard Harcourt talking. He was telling her what he had said to the agent, and what the agent had said to him; he was telling her about rate and rent and taxes; he was talking about allowances for decoration and length of lease.

He was giving her the name of a reliable surveyor, coupled with something about the drains; he was talking of outgoings and incomings and meeting the first quarter's demands; he was quoting figures—big figures—that she could hardly grasp.

She was only half listening. She was walking slowly round the premises that might one day be her own, touching the walls reverently, dragging her feet over the floor in order to enjoy the sense of contact.

And now Harcourt was talking of the disposal of the rooms, of where the counter should run, and where the cubicles would be, and how they might keep the upstairs room for an office, and the need for a staff cloakroom, and a lot about the use of storage in the basement.

"You're not listening to me, Loueen," he said.

"Well I am and I am not. I'm getting the drift, but I can't look and listen properly just yet."

"You like it?"

"I think it's wonderful."

Harcourt led her upstairs and let her inspect every nook and cranny of what he already optimistically described as their office. He led her downstairs and showed her the corner of the great store room which they could use. The upstairs tenant had filled the other half with packing cases.

"Well, what do you think?" he asked at last.

"Come over to the nearest teashop and tell me those figures again."

Over a marble-topped table he repeated all that he had said earlier, but this time he had her undivided attention.

"You think we can do it?" she said at length.

"I know we can."

Loueen looked across the table. "I think we're mad," she said.

"I know we are. Don't you like the feeling?"

"It's wonderful." She sighed. "Wonderful that you needn't keep your head, or weigh the consequences, or think of the future. Wonderful to know that you're mad and just submit and not have to do any of the tiresome things that plague sane people." She stopped and looked at him more curiously. "That's all right for me, but you've done all this before, started businesses with other women—"

"Yes, but never so mad a one as this. Those other women had capital or experience, or both. You have nothing but a straight nose, and a certain capacity for dogged perseverance. Come on. We'll go and sign the lease."

Half an hour later her name stared up at her from the document—a name that had never before stood on anything more important than a letter from school. And the house agent was bowing obsequiously and saying: "Yes, Mr. Power," and "No, Mr. Power," and casting sidelong approving glances at Harcourt Power's latest discovery. It was just as Harcourt had said, her name had acquired a fictitious worth because of his reputation.

If before Loueen's days had been filled with nothing but waiting, now they were crowded to overflowing with new people and new impressions. She was not very clear as to the money arrangements. She met in the city a grave, middle-aged man called Mr. Green. He was not at all her idea of a moneylender.

With him she entered into an agreement. She signed nothing. The man seemed to know Harcourt well and was satisfied. The money was lent not to her, but to Harcourt's reputation.

After that the preparations were of a more comprehensible nature. There were the decorations, pink to flatter the complexion, chromium which would withstand steam and London's fogs and careless handling, and silver to match the chromium.

For the next few days Harcourt kept her at it, running errands, choosing patterns, planning, scheming, deciding on this and that, debating on the other, so that she was busy from early morning till night.

One of her most lasting impressions of those days was of Harcourt arguing about money. He battled over every penny. He beat down the workmen, the contractors, the shops. He had assurance, patience, and knowledge. He won nine out of ten arguments.

And even while he was saving a penny here he was planning some grandoise scheme for the future.

"You've so many irons I can hardly see the fire, Harcourt," Loueen complained. "Aren't you afraid of putting it out?"

"Don't worry. I know the fire's capacity. I've been through this before."

It was a consoling thought. For sometimes it seemed to Loueen a chaos from which nothing could emerge.

Some explanation was necessary at Hampstead, so she gave them a very modified version of the truth.

"Mr. Power is opening a new beauty parlor and he's asked me to help."

"But, Loueen," Anne was horrified, "for how long?"

"Oh, I don't know. Depends on how it goes."

"I do think that's tiresome. Just when you'd got free of Elvira's. Whatever made you say you'd do it?"

"I like it," said Loueen.

"You don't perhaps mean that you like him?"

"No, I do not."

For once, Anne seemed really annoyed. "I'm tired of this nonsense," she said. "As to your undertaking to mind someone's absurd business—"

"This one won't be so absurd. It will have customers." Loueen sent up a devout prayer that she was speaking the truth.

"Then what on earth will you do with them?"

"I can't imagine," said Loueen, suddenly appalled at the idea of real people coming in and demanding real face massages.

But Harcourt Power had also thought of this, and he broached the subject the following day.

"We've got to have a staff—a competent staff—and you're to keep your hands off the customer's faces. Understand? Your job is to float around looking beautiful, to talk sweetly to the customers and sharply to the girls. At night your job is to be seen wherever customers are likely to be.

"Meanwhile, go on with your lessons, and never let the girls suspect that you don't know everything there is to be known. In six months' time you can occasionally honor a customer greatly by giving her your personal attention. Understand?"

"Yes."

"Right. Now we're going to the factory to see about our preparations."

Harcourt's car whisked them out to the Great West Road, and stopped before a nameless new building of which the walls seemed to be largely composed of glass.

"They make half the preparations that are sold here."

A Mr. Turner received them in his office. He was expecting them, and already knew their requirements.

"Some alternative analysis," he said, handing Harcourt half a dozen sheets of note paper on which were what looked to Loueen like doctor's prescriptions.

While Harcourt was studying them Mr. Turner handed Loueen some drawings. "Our artist did some sketches for your packing. Perhaps you have some suggestions."

She found that she was gazing down at a dozen types of box and jar

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and bottle, the drawings of which were colored in different shades of pink, and across each in bold lettering ran the silvered word "Loueen."

In a surprisingly short space of time she found that she had been a party to ordering tons of cream, barrels of powder, gallons of lotion, and that she was once more in the car and headed for London town.

"We must open with a splash," Harcourt was saying. "We're going to do some advertising. A mackerel to catch a whale!"

Next day Loueen found herself being introduced to Dick Flecker from the advertising agency. He was young and clean and pleasant.

During the conference Loueen sat almost silent while he and Harcourt mapped the campaign. The only matter that concerned her immediately was that she was to be photographed, and her picture used on every possible occasion.

At the close of the conference Harcourt was momentarily called away and she found young Flecker looking at her with an intensity that she had come to recognise in other young men. During the busy days she had forgotten the havoc wrought in a young man's feelings by a straight nose.

"We're going to make your venture a great success," he said devoutly.

And she raised her dark lashes slowly, deliberately, so that he could see how deep a blue were her eyes. "Oh, I hope so," she murmured, and thought that perhaps Harcourt had been right to put her straight nose as one of the chief items on the credit side of the ledger.

Their next job was to engage the staff. "We'll start with two fully qualified girls and a couple of juniors, who shall pay us for the privilege of studying the business, and shall lick the stamps and make the tea."

"You make us sound like a couple of hardened crooks."

He laughed. "Now about these girls. I've got a blonde up my sleeve that I've been watching for some time, and I've been recommended a brunette. They're coming to see us this afternoon."

The blonde called herself Gloria Lennox. She swept into the office with a considerable air of assurance. With her, Nature had once more followed a conventional pattern, and Gloria had overlaid it with art, so that her eyelashes hung like a fringe, her pink and white and red were all dazzling, and her golden hair had a metallic sheen.

Loueen and Gloria disliked one another at sight. Loueen saw in the girl a vulgarised and exaggerated edition of herself. Gloria saw in Loueen all the things she had tried to be and missed.

It was Harcourt who did the talking and asked the relevant questions and screwed her salary down to a pound less than she asked. Harcourt had known Gloria slightly for some time. They regarded one another with armed neutrality and the respect of experts.

"What do you think, Madame Loueen?" said Harcourt, when the recital had ended, and he made a gesture of great deference and created a new title all in one sentence.

"I think Gloria would adapt herself to our ways," Loueen said with charming condescension, and turning her dazzling smile on the girl she added, "I'm sure we would be a harmonious team," and was shocked at her accomplished insincerity.

"Thank you, Madame," said Gloria, with the accent on the second syllable, and created thereby the title by which Loueen was in future known to the girls. Already a new personality was being born.

"I like Gloria," said Loueen comfortably, when the girl had left the room.

"Do you?" Harcourt was surprised. "You didn't sound as if you did."

"Yes, I like her. By contrast she makes me feel a warm-hearted, trustworthy child of nature."

The brunette who followed was a quiet girl called Kate, who seemed to know little outside her job, but to know her job very well indeed.

She, in turn, was followed by the juniors. One of them was immediately rejected because of her complexion. Within an hour Harcourt had found another girl who was suitable.

So every day the shop became more and more of a reality, and every day Loueen learnt more of the business. She kept her head and she held her tongue.

YOUNG Dick Flecker, under the influence of Loueen's straight nose, was performing wonders in the advertising field. All was ready for the name of Loueen to burst upon an astonished world.

The opening date was fixed. The world had grown into a haze of pink and silver. Harcourt's activities reached fever point. It was to be an opening such as no beauty parlor had ever staged before.

A buffet was to be the length of the counter, in the largest cubicle a band was to play softly, and the highlight of the evening was to be a make-up parade.

"We've had every other kind of manneq'in," said Harcourt. "All the girls will wear our regulation pink overalls. We'll get some outside girls too. Gloria shall make them up, and they'll each show a different style:—the wind-kissed girl; the sun-kissed girl; and so on."

The shop was emerging from the hands of the decorators and the rose and silver were a success. Loueen had an evening dress of the same color. The office was full of little letters of acceptance from people with names, and second only to Harcourt himself was Dick Flecker, who came every few hours to report the capture of more celebrities.

The extra girls were engaged, the caterers were ready, Gloria had decided on the make-up, Harcourt had decided on the programme.

The evening of the opening was fine. There was an awning, a red carpet, and a commissionaire. The shop was floodlit. Little knots of people gathered in the street to watch. Loueen, early to arrive, heard the click of cameras.

Harcourt was waiting for her. There were flowers and telegrams from people she did not know. But there was also a message from Capri. It said:

"Do I get a rake off? Blessings, Elvira."

Harcourt was giving her his final instructions. He was tense but not nervous. He reeled off a list of names, people to whom she was to be extra gracious.

"Apart from that, keep clear of the reporters. I'll do the talking. If you get cornered say that you studied beauty culture in Paris. Don't have anything to drink till everyone is gone. Give the world your dazzling smile and keep your nose well powdered. I hope I've remembered everything."

"You haven't remembered to wish me luck."

"Oh, don't be a fool," he said.

The great cars began to roll up, and the people who went everywhere began to arrive. Loueen's was launched, part of London, part of Bond Street, part of the life luxurious.

She stood beside Harcourt Power to receive the guests. Rows and rows of people, pressing her hand, murmuring conventional hopes, looking for free drinks, and free snacks, and free smokes. Actresses watching her covertly to see what she was using on her face, gossip writers asking her questions, professional beauties examining the shop's apparatus. It was hot and smoky and crowded and noisy.

Loueen prayed to the unknown deity that her complexion would stand up to the atmosphere, that she would not wilt and grow pale, or flush and grow red. She could see Dick Flecker working industriously on her behalf, she could see Anne staring in astonishment, and Geoffrey at her elbow, obviously complaining of the irregularity of the whole affair.

She could see Gloria taking likely customers on a tour of the cubicles. And she could see hundreds of well-groomed faces, on which much time and money had been expended, the kind of faces she hoped to see bending anxiously while she consulted the appointment book.

"She's lovely."

Loueen heard the murmur as she moved among the guests, who seemed to imagine that she was blind, dumb, imbecile, and deaf.

"Where did you find her, Harcourt?"

"Want to look like her?" She heard him make answer. "Well, that's what we sell. A Loueen complexion bottled at a guinea."

Ianthe, looking magnificent, was among the guests. She carried herself regally, and there was nothing to suggest that the new shop caused her any misgivings. Loueen heard her refer to it as a "sweet little venture," and add how in this crazy world it was often the amateur who succeeded best. For her part she always welcomed new blood, because it was so stimulating for the trade as a whole.

The night wore on. The party had a slightly tousled look. Loueen's feet

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ached. Harcourt looked white but determined. People began to drift away. Once more strangers held Loueen by the hand and murmured their wishes for her success.

The room emptied. The caterer's men tidied the buffet and began surreptitiously to pack. The extra girls dressed and vanished. Gloria said good-night and hoped that everything had been satisfactory.

"Quarter to nine in the morning," said Harcourt Power heartlessly.

Someone opened a window to let out the smoke. There were now only a handful of people. They were suggesting to Harcourt that he go with them to a night club.

"You're tired," said Dick Flecker at Loueen's elbow. "Let me take you home."

"Yes, please."

Harcourt bade her good night in much the same terms as he had used to Gloria.

"Quarter to nine in the morning."

"Yes—are you—satisfied?" she asked, much as Gloria had asked.

"Might have been worse."

She had to be content with that. "Good night."

He nodded. His eager face was already turned to the little group who were debating which club they should visit.

OUTSIDE the moon was shining down on Bond Street. Dick Flecker handed her reverently into his car.

"You looked lovely to-night, Loueen," he said.

She was hardly listening. She did not notice that his voice trembled, she was thinking of all those faces that might one day be the raw material of her business.

The car climbed up towards Hampstead. The air was cool and there were trees under the moon. The world seemed refreshingly empty. Dick Flecker drew the car into the side of the road.

"Loueen——" he said.

Something in his tone startled her into realisation.

"Why, Dick, what is it?"

It was a stupid question, because she already knew the answer. If she had not been so busy calculating her prospects she would have kept up a meaningless chatter and this would never have happened.

He had taken her hands in his own and his words were tumbling about her, incoherent, youthful, sincere. She could see his lips tremble.

"Loueen, darling, I love you. You must know it. I've loved you from the first moment I set eyes on you. I want to take you out of all this racket. You're much too fine to be mixed up with these people. I could support you. Loueen, please, darling——"

"Don't," she said softly.

"I love you—I love you——" he babbled.

"Loueen, we could be married. I've enough for a little house and a car. And I'm on my way."

The idea revolted her. The thought of the little house even with the car, was a boredom from which she recoiled.

"I don't love you, dear," she said gently.

For a moment he was silent. "But you like me, Loueen?"

"Of course I do. But that doesn't mean a thing," she said hastily, seeing hope rekindled. "One likes so many people. And I love my work. I wouldn't give it up for anybody—not even for a man I loved."

"I see." His voice was very low. For a moment he sat quite still. It seemed a long time. Then he started up the engine and got into gear. "I've been a fool," he said. "Forget it."

. . . . . .

Loueen arrived at the shop at twenty to nine, beating the girls by three minutes. Harcourt was already installed in the office.

"Buck up and change. We've a lot to discuss," he said by way of greeting.

"You know the routine," said Harcourt when she reappeared. "Put one of the juniors with the appointment book on the telephone. You receive the customers yourself and then hand them on to the girls. Memorise their names and faces. It's up to you to invent an attractive and intelligent line of small talk. Now I'll get after last night's accounts. We'll lunch at one. I'll have something sent in. O.K.?" he went on.

"Yes."

Downstairs Loueen inspected her new kingdom. Everything shone. Everything was spotless. The girls were in their cubicles setting out their trollies.

The juniors were in the front shop waiting for orders. The appointment book was open at a large blank page. Everyone was silent and a little awed. Loueen picked what she hoped was the more intelligent of the juniors and installed her at the telephone. Then she filled one corner of the shop window with a restrained display of boxes and bottles.

After that she waited with a sudden sick feeling at heart, a fear that seemed lodged in the pit of her stomach. She was conscious of the pitiless young eyes watching her. Supposing the telephone never rang, supposing the door never swung open, supposing the boxes and bottles stayed unsold upon the shelves.

The girls could go away and get jobs elsewhere—go away laughing—a good story to tell of the magnificent expensive party, of the beauty parlor that opened to no one, of the—and then the telephone rang.

Loueen was conscious that they were all listening breathlessly while the junior, whose voice trembled a little, booked an appointment for three o'clock. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief. At least the day wouldn't be quite empty.

And then the phone rang again, and the junior switched the caller through to Mr. Power in the office, and then a chauffeur came through the swing doors to ask for a fur that had been dropped during the party. There was a flicker of life in the shop.

Five minutes later the phone again. Another appointment. And then at last through the swing door came a customer who wanted a massage and make-up right away as she had to catch the afternoon plane to Paris.

Hardly had her chatter been swallowed in Gloria's cubicle when someone called to buy a pot of skin food, alleging the peculiar reason that she tried every new food on the market was just to prove to herself that none of them were any good.

Loueen's heart sang. Something had started. They were launched. More calls, more customers, they were positively busy.

In the days that followed, Loueen was constantly surprised at the number of impressive names in their appointment book.

To all these strangers she was always introduced as "Madame Loueen." She began to forget that her real name was Miss Meredith. She could almost feel herself developing a new personality.

Hampstead hardly saw her. Everything except her work has ceased to exist.

Their advertising that season was concentrated on portraits of society beauties who were devoted users of Loueen Preparations. They received a lump sum, the offer of free treatments, and a gift box of pink and silver aids to loveliness.

Sometimes women floated in, and then disappeared to the moors, or the Riviera, or decided to take a course of slimming, or went back to the beauty parlor they had patronised in the past.

Frances Clifford was different. She had been chosen as one of the leaders of the younger set, and was the daughter of Sir Alister Clifford, the eminent architect.

Frances Clifford soon became a regular bi-weekly feature of the shop, and a profitable one, for she introduced her friends, took an almost proprietary interest in the business, and was soon on Christian name terms with everyone in the place.

"They're wonderful," she'd murmur to her friends, "they make even poor little me look presentable."

LOUEEN thought that Frances fluttered her lashes rather more than usual if Harcourt Power were anywhere about the place.

"She likes you, Harcourt," Loueen laughed to think that anyone could like Harcourt in what was always known as "that way."

"Well, I don't like her," he said, with grim finality.

She looked at him reflectively. She so seldom thought about him as a person with likes and dislikes. He was just a marvellous machine and a perfect companion, the most magnificently impersonal creature that had ever come into her life.

"You don't like anyone much, do you?" she asked.

"I like you," he said.

"Yes, but not what's called 'that way.' I think your liking is the grandest thing in the world—so unsticky."

"Unsticky. That's a good word."

"We're the only impersonal people extant."

"We? You don't know a thing about me. I've told you that before."

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"I ought to. I see enough of you," she retorted.

"That's nothing to do with it. You only know things about people by hard work—by thinking about them—by being interested. You find me about as interesting as the table and about as useful as your right hand. So let's have no more nonsense from you."

She laughed. "I promise. Only Frances Clifford is chock full of nonsense, and she likes you."

During the quarter that followed there were almost imperceptible changes in the shop. A delivery boy with a bicycle had been replaced by a neat little motor van in pink and silver. Kate had gone away to be married and her place taken by a girl called Helen.

They had also three new girls and an extra junior. They had an awning and a commissionaire. Their travellers covered a wider area. Harcourt was already talking of acquiring the whole of the first floor.

Loueen had received and refused two proposals of marriage. She had learnt to make up parcels in the professional style and to pack a bottle so that it would travel unbroken through the post. She no longer felt nervous of tackling the customers' faces. She knew that it was necessary for her to hold her own.

She knew that from the first Gloria had suspected her of being an amateur. She knew that Gloria disliked her, and only stayed because she was well paid and because for the moment Loueen's was the smartest beauty parlor in town.

When there was a clash of wills the affair was carried through with cold politeness. Gloria was the necessary irritant that kept Loueen from growing slack. If she were to take a holiday, were to be late, or absent, or indifferent, she might wake up one morning to find herself dispossessed.

Her conscience, too, had toughened.

"Commercial ethics are a thing apart," preached Harcourt.

Loueen agreed. What might be dishonest in private life was only business in the shop. There were two standards. Everyone accepted it.

The next quarter's accounts showed a small profit. Loueen handed her entire share to Mr Green.

"Don't you want any of it for yourself?" Harcourt protested.

Loueen laughed. "Of course! But I also want to own this business. At the moment Loueen's name is over the shop, but Mr. Green has the whip hand. It would be wonderful to feel that it is really mine."

He nodded approvingly. "That's the spirit. Three years. Unless you push someone's face the wrong way we should do it in three years."

Loueen had already acquired confidence in Harcourt's prophesies. She was therefore not surprised when the December accounts showed a substantial balance. Harcourt had his share, Mr Green had his, and Loueen found herself with money in hand.

"I'm going to do something I've long wanted to do," she said.

"Leave Hampstead?"

"How did you know?"

"I know everything about you."

"Sometimes I think you do. It's rather frightening."

"Yes, it gives me a pull."

They played truant from business and she took him to see the flat she coveted.

The front door was up a formidable array of steep steps, it opened straight on to the living-room, and at the back was a bedroom, bath, and kitchen.

"I can walk to work," explained Loueen.

"Surely that's not its only attraction."

"No. It's so compact and secret. I shall feel like a mouse creeping into its hole. You-can't-touch-me feeling. No one will ever come here—why should they? No one will want to interfere. It—it has such a temporary look no one would bother about it or me."

"Aren't you a queer kid?"

"I don't think so. Haven't you ever wanted to hide? You have me on show all day and generally half the night, carrying my face around with me. One's destiny isn't decided by one's character or one's ability, but by one's nose."

"It isn't the setting I should have chosen for the glamorous Madame Loueen."

"No, but it's eminently suitable for plain Miss Meredith."

"How will sister Anne take this?"

"Hard. I'm going to break the news to-night before my courage fails."

To Anne, Loueen tried to base the move largely on the plea that the new baby, Nicholas, would need her room. But Anne was not deceived.

"That's your polite way of saying you want to leave."

"Darling, I don't want to leave, but Geoff must be sick of the sight of me, and I am rather far from my work, and I do use the house as a hotel and that seems rude, and then I have fits of conscience."

"With me?" said Anne. "How could I want you to use the house except whatever way suited you best."

"Oh, Anne, you're so much too good."

Anne shook her head. "Rubbish. It's just that I live for my affections and you live for your work. I still think it's a mistake, but I can't interfere. I can't keep you here, Lou."

On Saturday, three weeks later, Loueen and the minimum of essential furniture were installed in the new flat.

Anne arrived with a basket of provisions, and was tactfully silent on the flat's many shortcomings.

"It's—it's cosy," said Anne, looking for something to approve, and Loueen had to laugh because it was just the adjective she had once applied to Elvira's pink salon.

That evening Loueen tasted her first freedom. Alone. She opened the door that led to the bedroom. Geoffrey would never allow one to leave a door open. Mother hadn't approved of slumping in an armchair.

Loueen huddled in the only one available. You couldn't put your feet on the spotless paint of Anne's mantelpiece. Loueen's slender legs went up and rested above her head. Father had thought that young girls shouldn't smoke. She lit a cigarette.

Next day, uninvited, Frances Clifford dropped into the middle of an otherwise perfect Sunday afternoon.

"You don't mind living alone?" she asked earnestly after she had thoroughly examined everything.

"I love it."

"You'll get lonely."

"Nonsense. I can have my bath and my bed and my breakfast just how and when I like them. I can be as selfish as I like and it hurts no one. All my life I've been discovering that the things They Say aren't true. One of them is that one's unhappy without love."

"You wait till you meet some man."

The retorts that rose in Loueen's mind were too rude to be put into words, so she changed the subject and very soon afterwards Frances took her little airs away with just a shadow of fear in her childlike glance.

To Loueen the year that followed was marked only by the progress made in the shop. The year had no seasons. Spring did not break, nor summer bloom, nor autumn mellow, nor winter decay. There was only the spotty season, the sun tanned season, the toning up in the autumn, and the treatment of chapped skins in the winter.

There were outstanding events which signified change. Anne had added yet another baby boy to the nursery. Harcourt had added yet another floor to the shop. Loueen's now offered you any kind of bath you might fancy.

One of the three men Loueen refused to marry had a title. Mr. Green was almost paid. Loueen was growing rich. The blue eyes were often narrowed in calculation, the small mouth set.

Two years slipped almost unnoticed into three. That third year had its highlights. Mr. Green was finally paid off, and there was the day they treated royalty, and the day Loueen attained her majority, and the day she judged a nation-wide beauty competition.

Girls came and went and Loueen forgot their names and their faces, but Gloria remained. The flat in the mews had begun to look very shabby.

Anne was expecting another baby, and Judy could now talk quite well. Geoffrey had reduced his golf handicap, and Elvira was busy divorcing her latest husband.

It was in Loueen's flat that she and Harcourt celebrated the third anniversary of their partnership. There was still only one armchair and Harcourt occupied it. Sometimes she wondered if the years had changed him a little, as if his bark were more savage than before, as if he found less amusement in the killing pace which he set for himself and everyone else.

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"They told me our partnership wouldn't work," she said "They were wrong. They told me you'd make trouble I wonder why?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "People don't like me," he said

"But why don't they like you? I do."

"I make them feel small because I'm not interested in them."

"But that's what's so splendid."

"What?"

"The fact that you're not interested." She walked to the window and looked out at the deserted mews. "That's what I like." She raised her arms and let them fall in a despairing gesture. "Oh, I'm so sick and tired of people who are interested—people who think they're in love."

Her voice rose a little in protest. "The whole tiresome routine The sly hand at your elbow, the whispered when-can-I-see-you-again.' The orchids Then just when I'm talking to a client, Mr X on the phone Will I go dancing?"

Harcourt threw back his head and laughed. "Oh you're a rum kid And it isn't as if——" He checked himself and left the sentence unfinished

"As if what?" she said sharply.

"As if you weren't a perfectly normal young woman."

"Oh, Harcourt, I am—aren't I?" Her voice was urgent and anxious. "Sometimes I get frightened."

"Don't be a fool It's just—just that the time is not ripe." His voice was low She turned to look at him His hands were clasped and his eyes bent on the ground He looked unaccountably dejected

"Have another drink, Harcourt?" she said quickly

He looked up "Yes, please." He was smiling now A moment later he was talking about some new rejuvenating gland extract.

. . . . . .

Frances Clifford was giving a party.

"I don't want to go," protested Loueen.

"You've got to go, Lou," said Harcourt

"I can't bear her parties They're so hot and crowded and full of architects."

"It is the cause, my soul. You're not getting stale, by any chance."

"No I never was keen on the social side."

"Well, you'll have to be, this time. Look your best There may be an American there I want to catch—name of Catlin—knows the whole colony this side."

"I always look my best," said Loueen

And no one could deny it. Stephen Moore noticed her the moment she came into the room—a room so overcrowded that it was hard to notice anyone

He pushed his way steadily towards her "Can I get you anything?" he asked by way of introduction.

"Yes—air," she said

"Step this way, Madam The two-seater is at the door"

He slipped a hand under her arm and started to edge her gently through the crowd.

"Beauty in distress always appeals to me," he said "Do you think it better to go out the front way or the back?"

She halted a moment. "You're not seriously proposing that we should go out?"

He nodded "There is a moon," he said, "a crescent moon like a silver sickle And there are stars The sky is a majestical roof fretted with golden fire Do you read poetry?"

"Never," she said firmly.

"That's all right. I'll read for two."

She resisted the pressure on her arm. "I can't leave this party."

"Why not? Fran asked us for our pleasure, didn't she? If it gives us more pleasure to be out under the stars, Fran wouldn't grudge us that pleasure."

"Wouldn't she?" said Loueen, who thought the young man couldn't know Frances very well

They had shaken off the crowd and stood in the hall

"Snatch up your cloak," he urged. "The car is open."

Some crazy impulse urged her to do as she was bid then slipped into the car beside him.

"Like houses?" he asked suddenly.

"What?"

"I build 'em."

"Oh, I see. One of Fran's architects."

"I was a pupil of her father's once. You haven't answered my question."

"Houses? No, I don't think I like them much," she said "They take such a lot of cleaning."

"Not the kind I build. Dirt proof. Like to see one?"

"Yes, please."

He headed the car north "I think it's the most important thing in the world," he said.

"What?"

"Houses."

"Why?"

"You spend nine-tenths of your life inside 'em If only——" he stopped.

"If only what?"

"I want to get a whack at building for the poor."

"Isn't it more profitable to build for the rich?"

"I suppose so I don't think money is much, do you?"

"Yes. I think it's nearly everything."

"I thought your eyes were calculating."

"I'm so glad."

"Why ever?"

"Because I'm so tired of young men who think I'm an angel slightly astray It leads to complications."

"They want to marry you?"

"Yes."

"I don't blame them."

"Now don't you start."

"I shall," he said lightly. "What's your name?"

"Meredith." Somehow Madame Loueen seemed very far away

"Mine's Stephen And how do you like your houses, Miss Meredith? The one I'm taking you to see is straight and square and red brick I don't hold with anything else for town use, do you?" They climbed towards Highgate. She was not thinking much of what he was saying, but she felt suddenly very young and irresponsible.

"I think I'd like to live in a tent," she said, just for the pleasure of hearing him contradict her

"I'm going to have fun making you house-conscious. We'll both have fun."

He stopped the car before a large house obviously only recently completed The bricks still wore a harsh look and the pointing stood out in bold relief The apple-green paint was sparklingly new and in the front garden the lawn was a chess-board of sods.

"Like it?" he asked.

She had never really considered a house before. Houses grew like trees. She accepted them.

"It's all right," she said.

"You don't sound very enthusiastic."

"That's because I'm thinking," she said, with a flash of her old honesty. "I'm not quite sure whether I know one house from another."

"I'll teach you," he said. He turned the car away and began the descent. "It's a lovely night. Like to see something else?"

"Yes, please."

"The first lesson," he said.

Now they were going back to town through the empty streets, back through the West End she knew, and down towards the river.

He turned the car into a labyrinth of back streets. Presently he slackened pace "Look there—and there," he said, pointing to a long row of drab houses, with flat faces and no two windows curtained alike.

"The rats bite the children and there are vermin in the walls. You can't get rid of them no matter how clean you are. There's cold running water on one landing. Wouldn't you like to pull 'em down and build anew?"

She looked at him sideways. "There are such a lot of things I've never thought about at all."

He stopped the car altogether and threw back his head so that the moon shone for a moment on his throat. "A new Jerusalem," he said "If we'd each play our part. Mine would be to build houses. What would yours be?"

This was an alarming young man who asked unanswerable questions. "Couldn't I sit on the side lines and clap or something?"

He looked at her thoughtfully. "You are so very decorative Perhaps we could just keep you for an inspiration."

. . . . . .

Two evenings later, Loueen allowed Stephen to take her to dinner.

They dined, at her request, in an obscure restaurant. As they drove there they talked in broken phrases of unimportant things.

He told her about his elder brother, Edward, and she told him about her sister, Anne, and he told her about the club where he lived, and she told him about the house where she was born and the school in Paris where she was finished.

"Finishing schools," he mused over

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the hors d'oeuvres. "Remember Colette's description?"

"No. I never read. Education didn't take with me. I learnt a lot of things, and I remembered them easily, but I didn't care. I wanted not to know but to do."

"Don't they run hand in hand?"

She looked at him distrustfully. "That's what They say but you can't always believe Them. If all the British Museum scholars were turned loose they wouldn't do a thing."

"I believe you're right. But if you don't read—you knit?"

"Never."

"Lou, what do you do?"

"Mind my own business," she said with the strictest accuracy.

He took it as a snub. "Sorry."

"Don't be. Ask me another."

"Well, Lou, what do you think?"

"The horridest things. Thoughts too mean for words."

"So do I," he said comfortably. "I believe everybody does."

"Do you really? Are you often shocked at yourself?"

"Frequently. If my thoughts were visible I'd be kicked out of my club, debarred as an architect, and shunned by my fellowmen."

"I am glad. I always thought it was only I who had such a mean nature."

"The longer one lives," he said pontifically, "and I've done it now for twenty-seven years, the more one discovers that everyone is like everyone else."

"Then humanity must be a washout."

"Oh no. We don't act on our thoughts." For a moment there was a visionary look in his grey eyes. "Humanity is pretty heroic."

"Perhaps I've met the wrong slice."

"We'll alter all that, Lou. We'll join the thinkers and see the world."

"But I tell you I don't think," she protested. This young man seemed to take a lot for granted.

"How old are you, Lou?"

"Twenty-one. Nearly twenty-two."

He paused a moment and said tentatively, "And you never even thought you were in love?"

"No, Stephen, isn't it queer? Do you think there's something wrong with me?"

"I think you're the loveliest, sweetest, funniest thing I ever met."

It struck her as rather a kittenish description for the great Madame Loueen, but as plain Lou Meredith she found it charming.

When he drove her home he asked, "Same time to-morrow?"

To-morrow! She supposed that she ought to be meeting somebody who was awfully important because they knew a lot of other people—and they all had faces.

But she said, "To-morrow," and decided that she wouldn't tell Harcourt.

When Stephen fetched her, he looked grave.

"I didn't know, Lou," he said, as he started up the car.

"Know what?"

"Fran rang up this morning. It was bad for me to leave the party, but it was worse for me to steal her celebrity."

The line of his face was set and angry. She didn't see what there was to be angry about.

"I'm not much of a celebrity," she said. "I do just what I told you. I look after my own business."

"A beauty parlor," he said indignantly.

"What's wrong with that?"

"Everything."

"What do you mean?"

"Spending your life pandering to the worst in other women."

For a moment Loueen was too surprised to answer. She had forgotten that once she had described the business as stupid herself.

"Why shouldn't they want to be young and beautiful?"

"Because the beautiful way to grow old is to do so naturally. Oh, Lou, I'm sorry. Only I don't like to think of you in that racket. I want to take you out of it all."

Someone had said that a long time ago. She couldn't even remember who it was.

"You see," said Stephen, "I'm a prig. I believe life is real and earnest and all that sort of thing."

"I owe my independence to the beauty business."

"Oh, Lou——"

She said with sudden heat: "I never set up to be one of the world's reformers. I never set up to be any better than I am. I liked you because I thought you were the one man in a thousand who realised I wasn't all milk and honey, nor as saccharine as I looked. Now you're just like all the others. You're angry because I'm not a stained glass saint. It's a thing I never wanted to be."

He capitulated instantly. "I'm sorry, Lou. I deserve it. I told you I was a prig. I've no business thrusting my ideas on other people. They're only right for me. Forgive me. See that roadhouse along there. We'll get a great juicy steak and wash it down with Burgundy and forget we ever quarrelled."

"All right, Stephen. I've forgotten already."

They had their steak—it wasn't as great, or as tender, or as juicy as the imagination had painted it—but it served—and a bottle of Burgundy, and the sickle moon, being two days older and rather stronger, they drove slowly home.

For the first time Stephen asked if he might come in.

"Why, of course. I'll give you a drink."

He barely looked round the room, he hardly seemed to notice the syphon and the decanter which she had laid out for him, and he accepted a cigarette without taking his eyes off her face.

"Won't you sit down?"

But he continued to stand. "Lou——"

Holding his glass she joined him on the hearth. "Yes? What is it?"

"Lou, I love you," he said without warning. "Will you marry me?"

It could hardly have been more concise or to the point. So many other men had said it in so many other ways—stammered it, declaimed it, written it.

This man had come along, with such a bald statement of fact, and turned her heart right over in her breast. This time it was she who trembled, and the palms of her hands were damp, and her breath came short and quick and stabbing.

"No, Stephen," she said. "I won't marry you."

"You don't like me?"

"I rather think I do, but it doesn't matter."

"Then why?"

"You wouldn't understand." She looked round her helplessly. "Like my flat?"

"No, I think it's horrible. What's it got to do with it?"

"For three years I've worked to have this. A little bit of territory that was my own, where I could be free and independent. That's something that lasts. That's something worth having."

"So's love," he said quickly.

"I don't know about love. I feel for you, Stephen, something I've never felt for anyone before. I suppose that's love. But They Say it doesn't last, and sometimes They are right. I'm not going to sacrifice the thing I know about for anything so problematic."

"I wouldn't interfere with your freedom, Lou."

"That's what you think. You wouldn't mean to but——"

STEPHEN drew her gently towards him as if tempting a shy wild animal to stay at his side.

"Listen, Lou," his voice was low and coaxing, "I'm going to marry you. We needn't have a home. We'll live in a hotel or a service flat or anywhere you like. You keep on your work, I keep on mine. I won't pretend I wouldn't like to build you a real house and have kids and find you there when I wanted you—but I know that's out of date. So it shall be whatever way you want it."

She let herself be drawn nearer to him. Her hands crept up to his shoulders.

"Stephen, that wouldn't be fair to you. Don't persuade me against my better judgment." Her arms crept round his neck. "Kiss me good-bye, Stephen. Pretend I never existed. Madame Loueen, the eminent beauty specialist, and Mr. Stephen Moore, the well-known architect, will never meet again."

"We're not going to part, Lou," he said, and now he raised his voice a little.

She stiffened in his arms. "Yes, we are, Stephen. It's all arranged."

He put his hand under her chin. "Sweet imbecile," he said. "Don't let's go into it all again." Suddenly she felt enormously tired.

"Do you imagine I'd let you go like that? I think you love me, Lou. I'm going to marry you if it kills me, darling."

Her lips were trembling, there were tears in her eyes. "Stop talking. Stop. I can't bear it." There was a sob in her voice. "I won't marry you."

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"Darling, don't be unreasonable." He stroked her gold-bright hair. "It can be three weeks from to-day."

"Oh, Stephen——"

He held her very close. "I shall love you so much, Lou, and you'll love me. Say it, darling."

She looked up at him. "I love you, Steve," she said. "I love you. I will marry you." An uncertain smile flickered across her face. "Isn't it the devil?"

"It's grand," he said.

. . . . . .

Everything else seemed easy compared with the business of telling Harcourt. Next morning he had a couple of early appointments and was not due at the shop till eleven.

He came in at last, unconscious of anything unusual pending, and Loueen followed him up to the office, while he told her of the beauty demonstrations which he was arranging in the large provincial stores. It was a complicated matter on which they had been working for weeks, and normally Loueen would have been intensely interested.

In silence she let him tell of his morning's work. When he had finished she made no comment. He looked across at her, suddenly aware that something was the matter.

"Isn't it O.K.?" he asked.

"Yes, I was thinking of something else—something I've got to tell you."

He looked up quickly. "If you've had another row with Gloria——"

She shook her head. She plunged. "I'm going to be married," she said. It was out now. She felt a sense of relief.

"You're what?"

"Going to be married," she repeated patiently.

He was silent for a moment, as if trying to take in the significance of her news. His face was white and his lips pressed hard together. Loueen was surprised. She knew that he would be annoyed—but this was something different.

"And the business?" he said at last.

"It won't make any difference."

He gave a short laugh. "That's what you think."

Loueen's temper snapped. "It's my own affair. I'm going to be married in three weeks' time and I don't need to ask your permission. If you don't like it you can do the other thing."

He raised his eyebrows just sufficiently to make her feel a fool, smiled a little, and took a turn up and down the room.

"So that's that, is it?" he said at last. Then he seemed to pull himself together. "At least we'll have a slap-up wedding. We need a bit of free publicity. I've exhausted all my stunts."

"I'm not going to be married under a battery of cameras."

"I hope you'll get 'em. Now that you've gone and got engaged without my assistance—and to a nobody—at least I'm going to organise the wedding."

"You are not."

His tone changed. Suddenly he was sweetly reasonable. "Listen, Loueen, you owe me something. The least you can do is to be married the way I tell you."

She saw the force of his argument. "But Stephen won't like it," she protested.

"What do I care? The business needs a splash wedding. I need lots of ordinary people to see you. The kind of people who stand about and look at weddings. They can't afford to come here, but they can buy our preparations in the shops."

So even on her marriage day she was merely to be an advertisement for Loueen's. Perhaps it was fitting and proper.

. . . . . .

The wedding day had come.

There was a crowd drawn by the sight of the awning and the red carpet. Anne and Judy were waiting at the top of the steps, and there was an anxious moment while the little girl was tethered to the train.

Then Loueen was conscious that she had her arm inside Geoffrey's, that the organ was playing, that the church smelt of flowers and expensive scent, and that somewhere behind this sea of acquaintances Stephen was waiting to make her his wife.

It seemed quite a long walk up the aisle, as if she had to battle through all these people, as if they were trying to make a barrier between her and the man she loved.

And there at last was Stephen, smiling, handsome, with little lines of laughter round his eyes, and she squeezed his hand hard in relief at having found anchorage at his side.

The organ had stopped and the ceremony had begun. Loueen noticed all sorts of half relevant things.

Now they were walking towards the vestry, her arm in Stephen's.

"Darling, darling, darling," he whispered in her ear. "I wish I could pick you up and run away with you and leave all those funny faces to eat their own caviare."

In the vestry there was much kissing and affectionate confusion, and then she and Stephen were walking down the aisle to a blare of organ music and into the waiting car.

The car stopped before the hotel, and two minutes later they were once more surrounded by friends and relations and big business clients.

It seemed a very long time before the reception was over and Loueen could escape to change into the little navy coat and skirt and the tight-fitting hat that was essential for Stephen's open car. Anne was putting the last odds and ends in her dressing-case.

"I'll say a proper good-bye here, darling. Not before that mob."

"Good-bye, Anne. You've been a saint, but then you always are. I'll never be a good wife like you, darling. I'll just have to rely on my complexion."

"Do, please, be awfully happy."

"I'll try, Anne."

For a moment they hugged one another, and then they heard Geoff calling, and ran guiltily downstairs.

Harcourt Power was waiting for Loueen in the hall.

"Don't stay away too long. Beauty parlors are like restaurants. You have to keep on thinking up something new or the clients try somewhere else."

"Oh, stop it," said Loueen. "What do I care about beauty parlors at the moment? Good-bye, Harcourt."

"Good-bye, Loueen."

But she noticed that he had not wished her happiness.

It was dusk when they reached the little Cotswold village, where the honeymoon was to be spent.

The days slipped by in an enchantment—golden days. Even the weather was kind. The garden of Eden was theirs.

Loueen was her own age again. She learnt how to play, discovering the countryside and love and laughter. A new world where there were no faces.

"This isn't life," said Loueen. "It's a dream."

Time was their enemy. Loueen hated to look at the diamond watch that marked its passage.

"Only three days more," sighed Stephen over dinner. "And then I start work on that new estate."

Across the passage the phone shrilled suddenly. "I bet that's Farmer Evans—will we help round up his pigs again?"

The apple-cheeked maid stood in the doorway. "Mrs Moore is wanted," she said. "It's London."

"Anne," said Loueen. "I bet it's Anne."

IT wasn't Anne. It was Harcourt Power, eager and persuasive at the other end of the line. He was talking hard about a Frenchman with a brand new treatment, over to sell the English rights. If they didn't snap it up someone else would.

". . . the chap has to go back to Paris the day after to-morrow. You must come back and see him. Come to-morrow. It'll only make a couple of days' difference."

"I can't, Harcourt, you know I can't."

At the other end of the line Harcourt repeated all his arguments. Ianthe was dickering for the thing. She really couldn't afford the outlay. It was urgent.

"But, Harcourt, Stephen——"

"Hang it all, you can explain to him. You've all the rest of your lives to sit contemplating the Cotswolds and each other."

There was a hostile silence. Then Harcourt's voice came coldly down the line. "You've been very quick to give the business second place."

She wavered. "I'll speak to Stephen," she said slowly, but she knew quite well that she would do as Harcourt wished.

. . . . . .

Back in London, it seemed to Loueen that life had unexpectedly become extremely complicated.

At the end of six months the strain was beginning to tell. Loueen would hardly confess it, even to herself. She had done things more difficult than this, and she wasn't going to be beaten. Long ago she had told Harcourt that she was tough. Now was the time to prove it.

Only her heart betrayed her. It was so difficult to refuse Stephen

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anything. And her body betrayed her. For the first time in her life she began to feel tired.

So came an evening when, as she came away from the shop and walked home, Loueen knew, as she put her key in the lock, that there was someone in the flat. As she opened the door she heard the ice rattling in the shaker and Stephen's voice saying: "You must have another."

It was Frances Clifford.

"Darling," she cooed, "I was in Berkeley Square—that hat woman's—and I suddenly thought perhaps you'd be in, and I came along and found Stephen all by himself."

"That's splendid," said Loueen, taking the drink that Stephen offered her and sinking into the other armchair.

"You poor sweet," Frances threw her a cushion. "You must be dead. I don't know how you do it—running a home and a business. Stephen shouldn't let you."

"She likes it, Frances," said Stephen.

"But it isn't good for her," Frances wailed gently. "You look all played out, Loueen."

"You mean I look a sight."

Loueen dived into her bag for her mirror and changed the subject. "What have you been doing, Frances?"

"Oh, you know me." Frances made a little depreciatory pout. "I never do anything wonderful. I'm just a see-there's-soap - in-the - visitor's - room girl. Of course Daddy keeps me very busy. Architects seem to have to entertain more than most people."

"Gale warning to Loueen," said Stephen. "She doesn't yet know that you can't settle the design of a door knocker over anything less than a four-course meal."

"Of course I like it," said Frances virtuously. "It's such a fascinating profession, isn't it, Lou?"

Loueen roused herself and nodded. She spoke crisply. "Yes, I suppose it's pretty important that people should have decent houses."

"When are you moving?" asked Frances, her eyes on Stephen.

"You'll be the first to hear my news, Frances. Only to-day—even Loueen doesn't know yet—I think I've found a good site. The moment I can snatch the bride from work we'll get it fixed."

A wave of depression swept over Loueen. Suddenly she did feel tired. A site—she knew Stephen would want a garden.

You couldn't find a garden within walking distance of Bond Street, and there was the move, and the decorations, and the furnishing, and then they would have to have servants and entertain. No one could be asked to entertain in a flat in a mews.

"Isn't that wonderful?" Frances was once more being politely ecstatic. "Do show me the plans, Stephen."

"I'd like to," said Stephen eagerly.

The telephone interrupted them. Loueen stretched a hand for the receiver. "I've a feeling that's Harcourt," she said fatalistically.

"Oh, not after office hours, surely," said Frances.

"Harcourt's hours are from dawn to dawn." She spoke into the instrument. "Yes?"

It was Harcourt—and he sounded worried. Could she come round at once? He wouldn't keep her long. But it was pretty serious.

"I'll come right away," she said. She laid down the receiver and turned to the others. "I'm terribly sorry. Something has cropped up. I don't quite know how long I'll be. Anyway don't wait dinner."

"You poor darling," said Frances. "I'm sure it's all Harcourt Power's fault. Why don't you come back to my place, Steve. There's sure to be dinner."

"There's food," said Loueen, waving vaguely in the direction of the kitchen. "Why don't you share it?"

"Do, Fran. Keep a lonely man company," said Stephen.

"I'd love to, you poor lamb. Don't worry, Loueen. I'll look after him." Frances laughed softly.

Loueen forced a smile. "Well, you two have a lovely old world evening. I'll be as quick as I can."

Stephen walked with her to the front door. "Bother Harcourt," he said, but his voice seemed somehow flat.

LOUEEN hurried to Bond Street and fitted her key in the lock and mounted the deserted stairs. After all she was glad she had come. There were things she wanted to say to Harcourt, and this would be a good moment.

Harcourt was already at work. The table was covered with ledgers and account books and pay slips. The petty cash box was open. There was a pile of cheque book stubs.

By way of greeting he looked up and nodded impersonally.

"Sit down, Lou. One of our idiot girls has made a mistake in paying in slips. Our imbecile cashier didn't notice it. There's a discrepancy somewhere in our accounts. We've got to trace it."

She stared for a moment, surprised and annoyed. His voice on the telephone had implied that something enormously important was happening.

"Trace it—at this hour of night?" she said impatiently.

"My dear girl, have you forgotten that the auditors are coming tomorrow?"

She said no more. She sat down beside him and started to read out figures. But her mind was not entirely on her work. She was annoyed with Harcourt. She was going to make it clear to him that this sort of thing had got to stop.

They worked on the figures till they succeeded in tracing the error. It took them three-quarters of an hour. Harcourt made a note of the matter in his clear handwriting, shut the ledgers, and relaxed.

"That's that," he said, lighting a cigarette. "Let's go out and get some dinner."

Loueen shook her head. "I'm going home," she said. "In a minute. I want to talk to you first."

"I'm very hungry," he said, "but I'll listen."

She paused a moment. She had to get him to understand. It mightn't be easy. When she spoke it was very softly and quietly. "It's this, Harcourt. Now that I'm married things have got to be run a bit differently."

"Go on," he said, "this is interesting."

"I want," she said deliberately, "to work from nine to six. I want an hour off for lunch. I want my evenings and my week-ends free."

"I see." He spread out his hands in a gesture of renunciation. "It's your business. You're your own boss," he said. "You don't mind if I say I told you so."

"It's my business—yes—but to go through with this I've got to have, at least, your moral support."

"Oh no," he said quickly. "If you won't work after hours I can't make you, but I won't give your slacking my moral support."

She walked once impatiently up and down the room. "It's absurd, isn't it?" she said, talking to herself as much as to him. "One ought to be able to run a business working eight hours a day. Why can't one?"

"Nine to six—the working day of the half successful."

"Then I'll have to limit my success," she said firmly. "You understand, Harcourt, I'll see people in office hours—and out of office hours I'm Mrs. Moore, wife of Stephen Moore, the well-known architect."

"You feel better now, Loueen?" Harcourt Power said after a long pause. "You wanted to get that off your chest. Now you listen to me. I'm not trying to cramp your matrimonial style. I'm only pointing out that the thing's impossible. We wouldn't have got where we are today if we'd had to run home to dine every evening at seven. Why, think of the nights we've sat up working till two and three in the morning. I'm not arguing with you. I'm telling you. Go ahead. Try it. Only it just can't be done."

"All right," she said, "that's what you say. I think you're wrong. I'm going to make a success of two careers."

"You'd better."

Something in his tone brought her up short. "Meaning?"

For a moment he looked silently across the room, and the dark eyes were visionary.

"We're on the crest of the wave now, Loueen. It's delicious and dangerous. We've got to stay there." His fingers drummed impatiently on the table. "We've both made sacrifices for this business, and you'd better think very hard before you throw away the results. It's not so easy to climb up a second time."

He paused for a moment and then went on more conversationally. "A beauty parlor is an extremely delicate plant. If we owned a mine, or a city tea-shop, or an old-established hatter's we might be able to afford a risk. But for us there's nothing but eternal vigilance."

For a moment Loueen saw the shop in a new light. It was a Moloch demanding human sacrifice. It was a menace to Stephen's happiness.

In the old days the shop had been something interesting and friendly: something absorbing and attractive. The shop had been a cheerful place. Now for a moment she saw it as an enemy. For a moment she hated it.

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The moment passed but it left a scar. Something had died. She would never feel quite the same towards the business again. She pulled herself together.

"You're talking nonsense, Harcourt. Exaggerated nonsense. Why, you're making a monster out of the business."

"It is a monster," he said slowly. "It will make us or wreck us."

Somewhere down the street a clock struck the hour. Loueen shivered. "I must go home," she said, in a flat, dull voice.

"Think over what I've said."

"I will." She pulled on her hat. "Good night, Harcourt."

He looked at her thoughtfully. "Beauty whose action is no stronger than a flower," he quoted, and picked up the largest ledger. "Shakespeare never guessed how it could be worth thousands a year in hard cash. Good night, Loueen. I'm glad we know where we stand."

Loueen arrived home to find the flat empty. She hadn't realised that it was so late.

She made her way disconsolately into the kitchen. It was bare and tidy. Without pleasure, she collected bread and butter, found tomatoes, and ate her supper on the corner of the kitchen table.

She returned to the living-room, suddenly realising again how late it was. Loueen shivered. Why didn't Stephen come? Presently she slipped out of her things, had her bath, and got into her pyjamas and dressing-gown in an effort to make the time pass more quickly.

Then she heard the car come racing along the mews, heard it stop, heard Stephen open the garage doors, heard him re-start the engine, close the doors, and come hurrying up their steep front steps.

"Hello!" he called, his key still in the lock. "Saw the light, darling. Are you long back?"

"Couple of hours," she said coldly.

"Did old Harcourt give you dinner?" Stephen came into the room now. He strode across, stood behind her chair, kissed her on the top of the head. "Where do you think I've been?"

"I haven't an idea," she said steadily.

He crossed over to the table and bent to mix himself a whisky and soda. "I drove out to the Blue Fields Estate. Took Frances. She's interested. Knows quite a bit about it too. Looks at it from the woman's angle. She's a great little housekeeper. I walked her all over the place. We had a grand time."

"That's good," said Loueen, and her voice trembled.

Stephen was too absorbed to notice. "You know, Lou, it's going to be the finest building estate in greater London. Frances came to it all fresh, and she thought so too. You see it's high, so that, although all the town is at its elbow, it can look over its head. That sounds a bit mixed, but you understand."

He stopped for a moment as if for the first time something in the quality of her silence struck him as peculiar. "Well, that's enough of my business," he said good-naturedly, "now, what about yours?"

"Mine didn't take so long to transact. Must have been wonderful seeing all those embryo houses under the light of the moon."

"We went back to Fran's for a drink."

"So I imagined."

There was no longer any ignoring the atmosphere. "Well, what is it? Do you object?"

"Why should I?"

He made a movement of impatience. "Hang it all, you said you didn't know when you'd be home. What do you expect me to do. Sit here, knitting?"

She did not answer. She turned her head away. There was a tiny silence, and then he saw her slim body shaken and he heard a sob. In a moment he was crouching by her chair.

"Darling, darling. I'm a brute. I didn't mean any of it. You know that. Don't cry, my sweet. Please. I can't bear it, Darling, darling. I'll do whatever you say. Frances isn't any one—I mean she's just someone who happened to be there at the moment. Darling, please, don't cry."

"It's not fair," she sobbed on his shoulder. "Women aren't fair."

"What women, darling?"

"All women," she said, and appropriated his handkerchief. "They don't end arguments. They cry and that isn't fair."

He laughed softly and stroked her gold-bright hair and held her closer. "Even business women," he said.

"That's the trouble," she said. "I care so terribly. You see, I went to tell Harcourt to-night that I wouldn't have the business interfering out of office hours."

"You did?" His whole face lit up. "Loueen, how splendid. Good for you, darling."

He went on quickly before she had a chance to tell him how Harcourt had received her news. "I've wanted something like this for so long. I began to think that Harcourt was master in my home. We didn't seem to have any part of the day that we could honestly and truly call our own. But I'd sworn I wouldn't say a word. I wanted to play fair. I wanted you to have your chance with your two horses. Now," he said, boyishly, "you've seen it all for yourself. A nasty shock for old Harcourt."

She twined her arms around his neck and pulled his face down to hers. "I love you," she said happily. "That's what matters most in the world."

. . . . . .

Life was subtly changed for Loueen in the months that followed. She found herself doing her bare minimum of work, and for the first time in her career keeping office hours.

Harcourt, after several efforts to detain her, seemed to have given up the struggle. Stephen had settled down quickly to what seemed to him a normal way of life. Once or twice he announced casually that Frances had been to the Blue Fields Estate, but he claimed all Loueen's spare time.

Loueen herself had a queer feeling that she belonged to neither world. She was doing what she had always said she would and could do. She was running her marriage and her business. And making a success of both?

Sometimes she wondered. Harcourt had given up asking her to work late. Stephen had given up talking about the site for the new house. But she wasn't sure whether that was because they were satisfied or dissatisfied.

It was a Monday, and Stephen had to go to an architects' dinner. Loueen therefore did not hurry, and it gave her a sense of freedom to know that she was not wanted at home.

She was giving her last treatment, and she stayed on chatting with her client. When they came downstairs they found the shop locked and empty.

"They must have thought that we were all gone," said Loueen, and she unlocked the door and let her client out.

The dust sheets were over the counter, the blinds were drawn. Loueen cast a critical eye around. It was a long time since she had been all alone in the shop. She rather enjoyed the sensation. She did not hurry now. She made a mental note of one or two things she wanted altered.

SHE would, she thought, go up to the office and look through the books. She'd only given them a casual glance during the past two weeks. In the old days she had gone through them item by item, thinking critically, constructively, about the incomings and outgoings.

She walked quietly upstairs and was surprised to hear a noise in her office. Harcourt must be there. She pushed open the door and stood for a moment arrested on the threshold.

Harcourt and Gloria were seated at the centre table. She was handing him a series of sketches, giving her opinion on each as it left her. On the table were sheets of paper covered with figurings. Loueen recognised at once all the familiar properties of one of Harcourt's schemes.

"Pardon, does this concern me?" she asked coldly.

They had not heard the door. They both looked up quickly. "Why, Lou," Harcourt was never disconcerted, "I thought you had left."

"Yes, that's what it looked like."

"Really, Madame——" said Gloria, getting out of her chair.

Loueen cut her short. "That's all right, Gloria. You can go. Mr. Power will explain."

An angry flush crept up the girl's cheek. Her lips twitched. Once she opened her mouth to speak, then closed it again. There were thirty seconds of silence. Harcourt watched Loueen. At the end of the thirty seconds Gloria had herself under control.

"Very well, Madame," she said coldly. "Good night, Mr. Power."

"Good night, Gloria." He smiled at her reassuringly. "I'll tell Madame all about it."

The door closed behind her. "That was magnificent, you know," he said.

"What was?"

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"The way she didn't lose her temper. That girl will go far. She's got self-control. Didn't you feel all the things she wanted to say? But she knew it would pay her better in the long run to keep her head. And she did. And I admire her for it. Of course, Loueen, you made yourself a first-class enemy for life. It was a gorgeous snub, but it may prove expensive."

Loueen was every bit as angry as Gloria, and not nearly so self-controlled. "Really, Harcourt, when you've quite finished telling me what I ought and ought not to do, will you explain why Gloria was up here at all?"

"Oh, that." He pushed the papers away and paused to light a cigarette. "That's your own fault, too."

"Whose business is this? Mine, yours, or Gloria's?"

"I wonder," he said coolly. "The point is that I've been trying for the past ten days to get a moment of your attention, but I understand that your husband's affairs have a prior claim. So I just gave up. I just decided to work out the details of the scheme with Gloria and have it all ready for your O.K."

"What scheme?"

"Oh, have you time to hear it tonight?"

She pulled out a chair and sat down. "Yes, I have time to hear it."

"That's a refreshing change."

"Go on," she said.

"It's like this." He paused for a moment to get his words in order. "New York's latest beauty parlors give their clients iced tea, hot tea, cold drinks free while they're having treatments. I've been working out what two girls, with two trollies, and their uniforms and their drinks would cost. Like the idea?"

She nodded. She had forgotten that they were in the middle of a quarrel. "I think it's a grand idea, Harcourt."

"So do I, Lou."

Somehow it was once more like the old days. In five minutes they were back in their old footing, planning, just as they had planned every step from the beginning.

And now Loueen was alarmed to think how nearly she had ceded the leadership of her business to Gloria. Such a thing mustn't happen again. That night she and Harcourt discussed the scheme till so late that Stephen was home before her.

It was surprising what a lot of work such a simple matter involved. Harcourt had always preached that anything they did must be done extremely well. There were quite a number of details to decide.

It took a lot of time when one's day was already full of appointments. But Gloria's presence in her office had shocked Loueen back into her old routine. She was working late again every evening.

Stephen lost his temper one morning at breakfast over her refusal to go to a party at his brother's that evening.

"But, Stephen, I can't just now. This rush is only for a little while. I'd got slack, Gloria had got out of hand. Now I've got to teach her her place again."

"Why don't you sack her?"

"I've told you already."

"You don't own that business, it owns you. I thought you were going to keep office hours."

She wouldn't confess even to herself that office hours didn't work. "So I will. Only I've got to get things straight first."

"I see. And how long will that take?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"And then the minute you take your eye off her Gloria gets out of hand once more and so the whole process begins again and we're back where we started."

It was so horribly like the truth that Loueen could only say angrily, "Don't be absurd, Stephen."

He picked up his hat. He didn't kiss her. He walked straight out of the flat, banging the front door.

All day long while she was at work Stephen was at the back of Loueen's mind. Once or twice she nearly decided to telephone him. But it was so difficult to reach him at the estate.

But she had quite made up her mind what she would do. She'd go home punctually and get dressed, and be all ready to go to the party by the time Stephen arrived. She stopped on the way home and bought a diamante clip.

After that she hurried. It was terrible to quarrel with Stephen, but it was very sweet making it up again.

LOUEEN let herself into the flat. The first thing that caught her eye was a letter addressed to her in Stephen's handwriting.

It was very short.

"Dear Loueen,

I'm tired of playing second fiddle to a beauty parlor. I am staying at the bungalow on the Blue Fields Estate. When you want me you can send for me.

Stephen."

Loueen stood in the middle of the room, turning the letter over and over in her hands. It wasn't possible. These things didn't happen—or at least they only happened to other people.

Three days passed without a word from Stephen. Loueen went about as in a dreadful, unreal dream.

After the third night, she had to fulfil an undertaking to mind their stall at a beauty exhibition. Night after night she watched the crowds passing round and round, breathed the exhausted air, and heard above the shuffling of the feet the amplified music of the band.

It had a nightmare quality, all these strange, drab people in their search for beauty. They were quite different from her Bond Street customers. Never before had she come in contact with shoppers who first asked the price, who examined and considered and often went away empty-handed.

She did not understand the type of salesmanship that was needed. She had a lurking suspicion that Gloria would have done better. At the end of each evening her balance sheet showed barely enough sales to cover the rent of their stall.

Loueen was very tired. Sometimes the crowds at the exhibition swam before her eyes, and her head ached, and her heart felt dead. Nothing seemed any use. Life had gone sour.

The loss of Stephen was like an active pain. It hurt day and night. There was no way of drugging it, no way of forgetting. But Loueen was determined to take it standing up.

It was, she reflected, probably a judgment. Life getting its own back. She had been so indifferent to others, she had despised their affections, she had been so blatantly heartless. Well, now they had the laugh against her. She was only getting her deserts.

And everything she tried to do at the shop went wrong. Harcourt was forever scolding over forgotten appointments, dissatisfied clients, poor salesmanship. She made mistakes, her hand had lost its cunning, her manner its charm. She responded dully to Harcourt's schemes and suggestions, and she had none of her own.

Sometimes Harcourt watched her covertly, a puzzled look on his eager face.

Once he said, "You're a positive handicap about the place," and she was inclined to agree.

Her mood affected everyone. There was an almost imperceptible slackening. One week it showed itself in the returns. They were down a fraction—only a fraction—but enough to set Harcourt considering very hard. He kept his finger constantly on the pulse of the returns.

Harcourt came to fetch her the last day of the exhibition. They had decided to pack the stuff that night so as not to have to make the journey again the next day. It was after twelve when they finished.

"We'll dump the stuff at the shop first," said Harcourt. "I'll drive you home afterwards and get that husband of yours to tuck you up in bed. You need a good sleep."

"He isn't there," she said tonelessly, hardly realising what she was saying, her mind on the empty flat in the mews.

"What do you mean, Loueen?" Harcourt's voice was sharp, it roused her, cut through her sleepy senses.

"What I say," she went on recklessly. The time had come when she couldn't be all alone any longer. She had to tell somebody. "He—he's left me. He's living on the Blue Fields Estate."

"Did I hear you aright?"

"Yes."

For a moment there was silence, then Harcourt's voice came cool and hard. "It's funny how it's all turned out."

"What's so funny about it?"

Again there was silence. Loueen looked down unseeingly into the empty street. When Harcourt spoke his voice was quite casual.

"You know I love you, Lou?"

She drew her breath in sharply, but she did not look round. "Harcourt, have you gone mad?" If she

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turned to face him it would all seem too important. In a minute he would admit that he had been joking.

"No," he said.

"Then what" —— and now she turned and faced him angrily.

"It's like this." He did not hurry himself. He talked quite slowly, and he did not move a step nearer. "I've always loved you, Lou. But you weren't ready to be loved—you wanted to go round in chain armour—remember? So I waited. I'm used to waiting. It's a thing you learn in business. I do it rather well. And then all in a minute—before I could turn round—you were in love, engaged, married."

"And deserted—all in a minute," she echoed.

"So I settled down to wait some more. I knew you couldn't drive your two horses if one of them was Stephen. He's the husband type. Have I waited long enough, Lou?"

She looked at him wonderingly. "You think you love me," she said slowly.

"Is that so surprising?"

"For you—yes. You're not that sort of person."

"You always did know more about me than I knew myself."

"I'm sorry, Harcourt." She sighed. "I was very dogmatic, wasn't I? And generally wrong." Little signs came back to her now, little things that he had said of which she had taken no notice. She was shocked that she had been so insensitive.

His voice was a caress. "Once, Lou, you said you liked me. Just me and Anne, remember? There wasn't anyone else in your life then. How's that liking now? Don't you feel anything or am I just part of the business?"

She tried to answer honestly. "I don't know, Harcourt. Of course I like you. Oh, more than just like—that's a stupid word. You do something to me—we have something in common—we've lived through something together."

"Good enough," he said.

"You don't ask much."

He laughed. "No, but I generally get a lot in the end. You like me, we can build a life on that. . . ."

"I've got to wait for Stephen to come back," she said.

"Oh that——" He paused a moment to light a cigarette. Something in his tone struck a chill at her heart. "You're sure he will come back?"

"Of course I'm sure," she said, and for the first time she wasn't.

He smiled and nodded imperturbably. "Just as you say, Lou."

They hardly spoke on the drive home. It did not take five minutes. The streets were empty. He drew up before her door and she got out.

"Good night, Lou. Think it over."

"Good night, Harcourt."

He sat and watched her while she mounted the steep little stairs.

. . . . . .

Tired though she was, Louen barely slept. When morning came, she turned over and tried to sleep again. She couldn't bear to face a day that offered so many problems. But she couldn't shut them out. They drove sleep from her mind, they drove her to get up, they drove her along to the shop.

She went mechanically about her duties. Harcourt was not there. She remembered that he had an appointment with a man about a new slimming process.

It was early in the afternoon that a sudden resolve came to Louen. She'd got to find anchorage. She'd take a taxi and go and tell Stephen all that had happened. When she saw him she knew that somehow everything would be simple.

It seemed a very long drive in the taxi. She had time to live and die a dozen times, for hope to fluctuate, for her tired mind to go round and round, for her to repent that she had ever embarked on this expedition.

The taxi twisted and turned and every now and then the driver had to stop to ask the way. Louen's heart beat impatiently.

She wouldn't, she decided, tell Stephen everything at once. He would be very angry about Harcourt, perhaps he would want to go to the shop and make a scene. Perhaps she'd never tell him that at all.

No, she'd just tell Stephen that she was lonely. He'd understand.

She wouldn't rehearse what she was going to say. That was unlucky. She'd just let him take her in his arms and that would be enough conversation for a long time.

The taxi was bumping over the newly made roads already chewed up by the contractor's lorries. They were on the edge of the Blue Fields Estate.

"Here y'are, missie."

Louen smiled. She must still look young, though she felt a hundred—still young enough to be called "missie."

"Would you wait, please?" she said.

He nodded. "That's right. I'd have to get my fare back in any case."

She walked along the ruts. In the distance she could see the walls of the new houses two feet high and the pink framework of the windows looking curiously naked and insecure.

Stephen's car stood outside the bungalow. She thought now that it would have been more sensible to have paid off the taxi. It would be quite a walk back to settle with him and she and Stephen would go home by car together and then they could talk.

She wasn't proud any longer. She didn't feel indignant or aggrieved. She wanted him and he could tell her she was in the wrong and scold her and she wouldn't care provided he loved her and cherished her and never let her go again.

She walked nearer to the bungalow. Some instinct made her stop for a moment and glance in at the window. Perhaps Stephen would be at the other end of the estate, up a ladder or down a drain.

There might be other people inside waiting to see him, and she didn't want at this moment to have to talk to anybody. If he wasn't there, she would wait outside till he came back.

She saw them through the window and it seemed as if her heart stopped beating. Stephen was sitting at a table covered with blueprints. Frances was at his elbow. For a moment Louen saw a little red lacquered nail point at something, saw the tumbled brown curls brush Stephen's cheek.

Then Louen turned away.

She couldn't bear to go back to the empty flat. She drove to the shop. She felt numbed. Absurd ideas floated through her mind. She was back at school with Anne, studying some poem. She had it now. 'Enoch Arden.' He, too, had looked through a window. She smiled a little at the jest. She was sorry that there was no one with whom she could share it.

Louen found Harcourt alone in the office. "Hello," he said, then added, "Shall we go out to dinner?"

"Yes, please."

"Care to dine at my place?"

"If you like." She was lifeless, pliant, he couldn't quite understand her.

HARCOURT lived in an expensive block of service flats off Jermyn Street. An impersonal man servant waited on them throughout an excellent meal. Louen ate little. Harcourt obligingly talked about one indifferent subject after another.

"I was thinking we might open a branch in Manchester. I've heard of good premises going cheap."

"Why Manchester?" she said with a feeling of repugnance to any of Harcourt's schemes. Life was quite complicated enough already.

"Why not? They want to be beautiful too."

"We've got enough to do here."

"Are you sure?" He got up and came and stood beside her. "Is it we who have enough to do — or just you who haven't any more time for the business."

"That's ridiculous," she said, but there was no conviction in her voice.

"Is it? Think it over," he said and refilled her glass.

Presently the man servant laid the coffee and withdrew. Harcourt settled Louen in an armchair and produced some brandy.

"You saw Stephen to-day?" said Harcourt quietly.

Louen was startled out of her apathy. "How did you know?"

"I didn't. You made it obvious."

"Yes, I saw him," said Louen.

"Not, I gather, a success."

"No, not a success."

For a moment there was silence. "Louen, look at me," he said. "You know I love you."

She looked at the dark, eager face, and some impulse prompted her to say: "A woman could love you, Harcourt, terribly much."

"Won't you try?"

"Me? That doesn't make sense, my dear. I've got a man of my own to love?"

"Does he love you?"

She paused a moment before she answered. "I'm not sure. I thought so once, but now I'm not sure."

"You mean you are sure," he said quickly. "Why pretend Louen? You know as well as I do that it's all over between you and Stephen."

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She hadn't realised. Even when she had seen Stephen and Frances together, it had merely represented a prolongation of the estrangement between her husband and herself. It had never struck her that it might be all over.

"Listen, Lou, that marriage was a great mistake. You two had nothing in common. Why you don't know a blueprint from a chimney stack. Look at the thing squarely. It's been a great mistake, not however, an irretrievable mistake. Divorce Stephen and marry me."

Loueen stared at him as if she could not possibly have heard him aright.

Divorce Stephen. Those were the words that stuck in her mind. The second proposition seemed of no importance. She wished Harcourt would stop talking so that she could think over this dreadful thing he had said. She must go away, she must have time and silence and privacy.

"I—I'd have no grounds for divorce," she said weakly.

"Are you so sure?" he said.

She evaded the question. He must stop. In a minute she'd get up and plead a headache and escape.

"Of course I'm sure." He opened his mouth to answer but she would not let him. She did not want to hear what else he had to say about Stephen. "It's very bad salesmanship, Harcourt, to force your goods when the customer shows resistance—at least so you've often told me."

"Ah, but you haven't heard my line of sales talk yet," he said quickly. "Marry me, Lou, and I'll give you the earth. What would you like— Switzerland for Christmas, Tanglers for March, London in May—everything that London offers and money can buy?"

"But the shop," she said.

"Oh the shop—other people can look after your part in the shop."

Before she could answer there was a knock at the door. The manservant stood outside.

"Excuse me, sir. There's a policeman below about the lights of your car. I'd have turned 'em on, sir, but you've locked the door."

"All right, I'll be down. You'll excuse me a moment, Loueen?"

"That's all right."

She heard the door shut and then the lift gates. In a moment or two Harcourt would be back for an answer. And what answer could she possibly give. She no longer knew what she thought about anything, she no longer knew where she stood.

She got to her feet and picked up her hat. Some instinct prompted flight. Harcourt could make you say things you didn't mean. Harcourt could turn your will to water.

Softly she closed the door of the flat behind her and started down the stairs. She must get away from the sound of his voice. On the second floor she saw the lift going upwards.

When she reached the street the lights were on the car and no one was standing near. She began to walk very fast towards Piccadilly, and as she walked she did not think at all about Harcourt because she was so busy thinking of Stephen.

When she got to the end of the street Loueen no longer walked so fast. She drew breath and began to wonder why she had run away. Instinct—a right instinct. She needed time to think. Harcourt was clever, she had to be clever too. She was not going to let herself be swept along by his passion for having everything his own way.

But divorce. He had thrown the word like a stone into her consciousness, and the word had a terrible ring of finality.

She went to the shop next morning with some misgivings. The situation was awkward. How would she explain to Harcourt her behaviour of the night before?

"They say there's been a breakdown on the tube, Madame," said one of the girls. "Gloria isn't here yet. Lady Dunthorpe has an appointment at ten."

"All right. I'll take her," said Loueen. How trivial it all seemed.

The girl was recounting one detail after another, and Loueen realised that it was a long time since she had been asked so many questions. A moment later the reason became obvious.

"And that Italian, Madame, she is going to have the foam baths."

"The Italian?"

"Oh, you didn't meet her—I forgot, Madame—Gloria fixed it."

THAT was the secret. Gloria fixed it. No matter how hard Loueen worked, Gloria was still undermining her position. Gloria fixed it. What did she care?

It seemed absurd that everything in the shop should be just the same as usual, the rushing, gossiping women, the slim assistants in their rose uniforms, the air always warm and heavy with steam and scent. The smiling atmosphere that hid the commercial heart.

"Lady Dunthorpe is here, Madame."

Loueen went upstairs, still thinking how unreal it all seemed. The customers were dolls, the whole thing just a superior puppet show.

"Good morning, Lady Dunthorpe."

Lady Dunthorpe turned her head.

"Why, it's Mrs. Moore," she exclaimed.

Loueen started. It was a long time since anyone had called her that. "Yes, but here, you know, I'm Madame Loueen."

"Of course, and how are you and your nice husband? Such a handsome man."

"We're very well, thank you," said Loueen politely, and patted the cushions on the sofa so that she could get on with the job and stop talking about her "nice husband."

"That's good," said Lady Dunthorpe. "Well, I've been here quite a lot since, you know. Gloria has been excellent."

"So I see," said Loueen, her eyes for a moment on the mask-like face. "You're looking wonderful."

"Yes, I'm very pleased. Where is she? I have an appointment with her, you know."

"I'm awfully sorry. There's been a breakdown on the tube they tell me. She hasn't got here yet. I'm going to take you myself."

"Oh, I see." Lady Dunthorpe's voice was cold, but she settled herself on the sofa.

Loueen's hands went through the accustomed movements, but her mind was miles away. She heard Lady Dunthorpe droning on about her face, her friends' faces and what they did and what they didn't do, and it was all just a meaningless noise. From time to time Loueen said "Yes" and "No," and hoped they fitted the case. She curtailed the massage. She did the make-up perfunctorily.

"Thank you," said Lady Dunthorpe when it was finished, and she put on her hat and said "Good morning" and left.

It couldn't escape even Loueen's confused senses that she wasn't pleased. Loueen felt a strange numb indifference. She rang for a junior to come and tidy the cubicle, picked up her personal belongings, and followed Lady Dunthorpe.

Her client had already reached the shop, and Loueen saw from the top of the stairs that Gloria and Harcourt had arrived together.

Lady Dunthorpe stepped impulsively towards Gloria. "There you are, my dear, where were you? I've had a terrible time. Never let anyone but you touch my face here again. Look at this make-up, it's frightful. Now could you come round at lunch time to my place? I'll send the car. I'll have lunch ready for you and you can do my make-up again. I've got a bridge party this afternoon. I can't go looking like this."

"Why, of course, Lady Dunthorpe. I'll be delighted. Who did you this morning? Very careless, I must speak to them. I'm sorry, the tube broke down. Who was it?"

"That Mrs. Moore. You know, Mr. Power, you took me to her wedding. Owns the place, doesn't she?"

"That's right," said Harcourt, hastily. Gloria'll be along to you."

"I'll send the car at one."

"Thank you so much."

As the door closed behind Lady Dunthorpe, Loueen ran down the remaining stairs. She was so angry that everything else was forgotten, both her discretion and her personal problems.

"Gloria," she said sharply, "I do not allow you to make private engagements with the customers of the shop; your luncheon hour is changed to two, and what do you mean by arriving at work an hour late?"

"Loueen, don't be a fool," said Harcourt quickly.

"I'm not being a fool," said Loueen. "I'm a little tired of everybody else running my business."

"Of course if Madame doesn't wish me to do Lady Dunthorpe's face," said Gloria icily, "Madame must resign herself to losing a very good customer."

"You run along, Gloria," said Harcourt, "we can discuss all that later. Come along, Loueen."

Her anger died. She'd been a fool. She'd played right into Gloria's hands. She followed Harcourt upstairs. He closed the door behind him like a man clearing the decks for action.

"And what was the meaning of all that tomfoolery?" he demanded.

"The meaning is this," she said. "You two seem to forget that this is

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my business. I'm the proprietor and Gloria is my employee. Haven't you both lost sight of that somewhere?"

"You seem to forget that a business can't be conducted on hysteria and personal prejudices."

"That's my affair. I'll conduct it how I choose. You helped to break up my marriage, Harcourt, and you're trying to break up my business."

He paused a moment before answering. "I'm offering you something else instead," he said. "I've asked you to marry me. Louen, why did you run out without giving me an answer?"

"Because I was afraid."

"Afraid—of what?"

"Of you—and me. You impose your will on mine often against my better judgment. When it's a question of taking on a new girl or buying a face cream formula it doesn't so much matter. But this is a question for all the rest of my life. This is something in which I've got to make up my mind for myself."

HE said quietly: "And so you ran away. That doesn't solve anything."

"You're right. I thought Stephen shouldn't have run away—and then I did it myself."

"You've worn yourself out. You take a holiday, Louen. That's what you need. How about a fortnight at Deauville?"

"While Gloria firmly gets control?"

"Louen," he said gravely, "one day Gloria is going to have control anyway."

"Don't you believe it." But there was a little fear at her heart.

"But it's true. The thing is that she naturally wants control when the business is thriving. She's ready to pay you a good price, Louen."

"She's ready to—— What are you talking about, Harcourt?"

"I'm offering to buy the business."

"You—you're—I think you're mad."

"No you don't. Your heart isn't in this any more. Gloria has got backing."

"Lady Dunthorpe?"

"She's one of them, and there are men. As you may imagine, Gloria appeals to men. She'll be a better business woman than you ever were, Louen. She has the right temperament."

"You needn't imagine for one moment that I'd sell."

"No?"

"No."

"Well, we'll have to look about us and see what else we can do. I should think it over, Louen."

"That wouldn't make any difference."

"Oh yes, it might. This morning you're angry, upset——"

She sighed. "And I counted on your loyalty—and I counted on Stephen's fidelity—I was a bit of a fool."

"This is a matter of business, Louen. I've told you often enough I never allow my private feelings to interfere with my business."

"Your private feelings! You haven't any feeling. All you have is calculations. Your heart does sums."

"You know so little about me," he said.

"I'm learning. Two months ago I wouldn't have believed that you'd have backed one of my girls in an effort to elbow me out of my own business."

"Two months ago you were fit to run a business." He got up. "This is getting us nowhere," he said. "All I'm asking is that you should think it over. I've got a busy morning. I must push off."

The office had become hateful to her. She could not face Gloria and the shop. She took a taxi to Hampstead.

"Darling," Anne greeted her in surprise, "at this hour of the day. Why aren't you face pushing?"

"I—I wanted to see you—something's happened. Are you busy?"

"No. Have a cigarette, darling? A sherry? Take a chair. Or shall we go into the garden?"

"Thanks." Louen took the cigarette. "Let's stay here."

"You look tired. What's happened?"

Louen looked at her sister thoughtfully. "I suppose it won't seem awfully important to you. It came to me as a terrible shock. They say the people most concerned are always the last to notice anything."

"Now that we've gone all round the bush, what are you trying to say?"

"Harcourt wants to buy the business!"

"Well, I think it's a splendid idea. Yes, the more I consider it the more I like it. You've worked quite hard enough to last you a lifetime. What's he offering?"

"I never ever asked him. I just said I wouldn't sell."

"But, Lou, that's silly. Don't you see, if you can get out of the business you can be a proper wife to Stephen. I'm sure he needs it."

"Possibly," said Louen in a small strangled voice, "but you see Stephen has left me."

"What?"

"Yes. Just what I said. Stephen has left me." Louen walked to the window. "Harcourt wants to marry me," she added.

"I think I'm going mad," said Anne. "I wish you'd only tell me one thing a day."

"You have it all now."

"I should hope so. What are you going to do about it?"

"What do you advise?"

"You wouldn't take my advice," said Anne, "but I'll give it all the same. You should sell to Harcourt, and make it up with Stephen."

"I like your grand simplification. Supposing Stephen doesn't want to—to make it up."

"Of course he does."

"Then why doesn't Stephen come home?"

"Too proud. Very silly to be proud. Never gets anyone anywhere. And it will all be much easier when you haven't got the business."

"I've no intention of selling the business."

"Why not?"

"Because I'm not beaten yet."

"What are you talking about?"

Louen swung round. There was a new animation in her face. Something of her old fighting spirit returned. "I'll tell you, Anne. I said—remember?—when I got married that I'd drive my two horses—I said it could be done. I was quite a bit of a pioneer."

"I remember, darling. You were sweet." Anne's voice was comfortable and motherly, but not at all the voice in which you should address a pioneer.

Louen smiled wryly. "It's not a bit of good trying to deflate me, Anne. I still think the thing can be done. I've had bad luck so far, but bad luck can't last for ever. I'm going on with my fight. I won't sell to Harcourt, I won't crawl to Stephen. If he loves me he'll come back. If he doesn't love me it's finished anyway. I'm glad I asked your advice."

Anne preserved her unruffled calm. "Very careless of me. I should have told you to do just the opposite."

Louen smiled. "You're so restful, Anne. You never try to impose your will on anyone."

"No." Anne agreed thoughtfully.

"And if I fall—I've still a strong hand," Louen said lightly. "You haven't forgotten Harcourt's proposal."

"I haven't forgotten it. I consider it an insult. In fact I think the whole proceeding is extremely cold blooded."

"I wish I could agree — cold blooded!" Louen said with a sudden gust of passion. "It's the modern idiom to discuss one's emotions as if they were a chess problem."

There was a break in her voice. "But you don't suppose they hurt any the less. It's funny that you should accuse me of being cold blooded. Harcourt says there's a flaw in my nature. That I'm rude by my feelings. You can't both be right."

"I still think there's a lot to be said for a good howl. When Geoff leaves me I warn you I shall bay the moon, refuse food, and probably go into a decline."

"That's what you think now. When it came to the point you'd be tight-lipped, smiling, and heroic."

"Like you?"

Louen had to laugh. "Like me—oh, Anne, you do me the world of good. You make me feel such a fool."

"We're all fools about our own affairs. That's why I never have any."

"You used to say, Anne, that when I fell in love it would be a cataclysm."

"Was I right?"

"It's all that and more. Sometimes I can't believe I'm the same person."

"You aren't," said Anne.

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I said."

Louen nodded. "I know. I've kind of noticed something myself. But I'm banking on the fact that it doesn't last."

"What doesn't?"

"This. I mean all this feeling my heart's broken, and my life's over and the world is dust and ashes. Surely one can't go on feeling that for any man in the world for more than six months! After all, there are such a lot of other things in life—" She stopped. "Or aren't there?"

"There wouldn't be for me," said Anne quietly.

"Oh, but, Anne, you're different. You're a romantic."

"And you? You're a romantic too. Only when you were very young you fell in love with a shop instead of a man. Now you know better."

"But don't tell me I'm going on feeling like I do now."

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"I don't know," said Anne. "I shouldn't take any risks. I should try to get him back."

"Oh don't be a ninny. If he wants to come back he knows the way."

Anne abandoned the argument. "Come on," she said. "Let's have lunch. The children have gone off to spend the day with Geoffrey's mother."

"Yes, let's have lunch and then I'll go back and do battle. I feel better."

But as Louden drove back to Bond Street her good spirits ebbed a little. It was one thing to plan a fight to the death in Anne's sunlit drawing-room, but the rapacious little streets engulfed her, hard and cruel. She dismissed the taxi in Oxford Street and walked to the shop.

She ran straight into Gloria, idle for a moment, polishing her own nails at the door of one of the cubicles. Louden did not ask her whether she had been to Lady Dunthorpe's, partly because she knew the answer, partly because it no longer seemed to matter very much. Besides, she had something more important to speak about.

"I want to apologise, Gloria. I was very rude to you this morning and I was unfair." Her conscience felt better since she had got that off her chest. She could not resist putting a sting in the tail.

"I like to treat my girls fairly, and I'm ready to acknowledge when I'm in the wrong." Gloria, she knew, would not care to be classed into the other girls as objects of Louden's benevolent sense of justice.

GLORIA'S face, after all, was an even better mask than Lady Dunthorpe's. Gloria's self-control was magnificent. "It's quite all right, Madame."

"You like this work?"

"Oh, yes, Madame." The answer was as pat, as meaningless, as if Louden had put a penny in the slot.

Louden longed for some human reaction, longed for some common ground where they could find that, after all, they were not enemies, but just two girls doing the same job.

"You never get tired of all that faces? I used to. I used to wonder why they wanted to be beautiful. Whether it was to get jobs or meet their boy-friends or wheedle their husbands. And then sometimes I used to think it would be fun to wash them with soap and water and show them the faces they'd almost forgotten."

"Really, Madame?" Gloria's voice expressed mild surprise and a slight degree of shock.

"You never felt like that?"

"No, Madame."

Louden saw a junior trotting ahead of a middle-aged woman.

"My client, Madame," said Gloria.

Louden nodded and moved away. She knew now that she had nothing to hope from Gloria. If it came to a pitched battle she would be as ruthless as Harcourt himself.

Harcourt hurried in at closing time with news of a scent manufacturer and cut price terms.

"Thought over Gloria's proposition?" he asked when he had finished.

"It's Gloria's is it? I thought it was yours."

"It will be her money."

"As once it was mine."

"Exactly."

"What's she prepared to offer?" Louden asked.

"What do you want?" he countered.

"Oh no—you came to me."

"Now you're talking sense."

"That's where you're wrong. I was merely curious. I wanted to know the price of three years' hard labor."

"You'd get a good price."

She shook her head. "I shouldn't take it."

"Louden, listen to reason."

She shook her head. "It's no good. I did what you told me. I thought it over, I decided I shan't sell."

There was an angry light in his eyes. "Think it over some more," he said.

"I've made up my mind."

"Lou, I don't want to force your hand. Why not give way now, gracefully, before things get unpleasant."

"You can't force my hand."

"Can't I? You'll see. Don't make me do it. I don't want to."

"You can't, Harcourt."

"All right. The fight's on, Lou. You asked for it, don't blame me."

. . . . . .

Next day Louden discovered the trend of Harcourt's preparations. There was an empty shop in Arundel Street. At lunch time she saw Gloria coming out of it with what was obviously a house agent's clerk.

Perhaps it was better to know what you were up against, but the discovery was a shock. How many of the clients would go with Gloria? And would Harcourt go even if Louden didn't sell?

Louden stood quite still in the street, unconscious of the passers-by. She was defeated. She knew now that she was defeated. And that very evening Harcourt returned to the attack, only this time Gloria was openly a party to the deal.

Louden was tidying the office before leaving when they came upstairs.

"Could I speak to you, Madame?"

Harcourt had come in and pulled out a chair for himself. He sat down rather as one prepared to lay a long siege. Louden looked across at them. The enemy. She was going down fighting.

"Certainly, Gloria — won't you sit down?"

But Louden did not sit down. She smiled to herself as she thought that she needed to stand, just because it gave her a few inches, just because for the moment it seemed to help.

"You know what it's all about," said Harcourt. "I'm afraid we're delivering an ultimatum."

Louden did not look at Harcourt. He could bend her to his will. But perhaps in Gloria there was still something of the old habit of submission. The girl's face expressed nothing.

"Gloria had something to tell me," said Louden.

"It's very simple, Madame." The speech had obviously been rehearsed. "Mr. Power told you that I would like to make an offer for the business."

"Oh, but I refused it."

"Yes, Madame, but the matter didn't end there. If you won't sell I shall have to resign. I shall take a place in Arundel Street. I shall take two-thirds of our customers and Mr. Power will come as manager."

Louden thought in a detached way that it was all beautifully expressed. Gloria had put her argument in a nutshell. There was obviously nothing more to be said.

She looked down at the Bond Street traffic. The long black cars were sliding to cocktail parties. The long red buses were crowded with typists and shopgirls. The delivery vans were on their last round. Bond Street.

Across the road a jeweller's shop window reflected the sunlight in a thousand tiny facets. Next door a florist's window bloomed luxuriantly. Bond Street. Hard, shrewd battleground where she had been forced back to the last ditch.

HARCOURT broke the silence. "Your move, Louden."

"Have I still a move left?"

"Only one I'm afraid."

"And if I refuse?"

Harcourt shrugged his shoulders. "Naturally we'd like an established business. We'd like the name. Gloria's ready to pay for the goodwill. We know this place, we don't want to waste a lot of time over decorations and fittings. We know the staff. There are a lot of obvious reasons why we'd like to buy your business, Louden. But if you won't sell——"

"Well?"

"Gloria will set up in Arundel Street —just as she told you—and after that how long could Louden's last? Will you at least let your lawyers and hers meet and discuss terms."

"You win," said Louden tonelessly.

"Thank you, Madame," Gloria got up. "I'm sure you'll be glad when it's all settled."

Louden did not answer. She was still looking down at Bond Street, moving like a river, down to Piccadilly. She heard the door close behind Gloria, for a moment there was silence. Then she heard Harcourt get up, and a moment later he was standing beside her.

"Never mind, Louden. It hurts now, you'll be glad later on."

"You sound like the family physician talking to the youngest," she said coldly.

"I am the family physician. I recommend a good dinner. Where shall we go?"

"I don't care," she turned a little and looked at him. "I thought you loved me, Harcourt."

"So I do, Lou, but that has nothing to do with business."

"I wonder why I troubled to fight you. I think I knew all along that you were bound to win in the end."

"It's a human instinct to fight."

She looked round the room in which she had worked so hard. "What am I going to do with my life?"

"You're going to marry me. Come on, I'll give you fifty good reasons over dinner."

She did not resist. She no longer cared.

The restaurant Harcourt chose was very elegant. You sat in a miniature Versailles, with perspective pictures which made the walls seem to stretch down avenues of lime. It was very full. The head waiter found them a table in a little alcove.

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Loueen looked around her. All the people that came in and out of the shop. They had different faces and frocks, but fundamentally they were the same people. If they weren't clients to-day they had been yesterday and would be to-morrow.

And then farther down the room in another alcove, she recognised two diners. Her heart beat painfully, her dream crashed, she was defeated in good earnest.

For at the other end of the room sat Stephen and Frances.

Loueen shrank back against the wall. She could hear Harcourt's orders, as though from a long distance, and the waiter's murmur. She kept her eyes on the far corner.

"What shall we drink?"

A cup of cold poison, mother make my bed soon. That wouldn't be a sensible answer.

"Please, Harcourt, you do it all."

Frances looked lovely. There was a little flush of animation on the soft cheeks. Her skin had by nature a warm olive tint so that she looked like a healthy child. Her eyes sparkled.

Perhaps they were going dancing. Stephen was in tails. Frances wore a frock of pale blue tulle, a billowing frock, very soft and girlish, the sort of frock that every man in his heart likes best. She was talking hard, gesticulating a little, and Loueen saw Stephen smile and lean forward and pat her hand.

Loueen turned away just as the waiter took the last of the order.

"You see who's over there," she said.

Harcourt looked in the direction she indicated. "Why it's your ex-husband, and the Clifford girl."

It didn't matter to him, it didn't matter to anybody. Nothing seemed to matter in this horrible new world. You had to go on smiling and making jokes and being indifferent and tight-lipped and heroic. Anne had been right to want to howl and faint and make scenes.

"I'd forgotten Frances," she said softly.

"Forgotten her? What do you mean?"

"In my calculations."

Harcourt laughed. "Oh, she plays a big part in the little drama. Second lead, I think it's called. She has some very good lines in the opening scenes, but she always gets hissed off before the end."

"But she takes the hero with her."

"Oh, I wouldn't call him the hero."

"I quite understand that there's competition for the part," she said.

"After all, Loueen," for a moment his voice had a weightier note, "the hero is the fellow who lasts through all the acts."

"The hero," she retorted, "is the fellow with whom you live happily ever after."

"And why not?"

The waiter had brought the smoked salmon. Loueen's eye strayed again to the other alcove.

"Fran is lovely," she said softly.

"Lovely," he echoed, in a matter-of-fact voice.

He looked at the girl beside him. During the last weeks she had grown a shade too fine drawn. Her skin seemed transparent. The blue-grey eyes looked very large and something was there which had before been lacking. Maturity? It was too strong a word. The soft mouth drooped a little, pulling down the lines of her face.

Harcourt thought professionally—Good heavens she mustn't be allowed to do that. Why, it was the first principle of all face massage that the lines must be worked upwards. She was twenty-two and she was beautiful, but something in her whole bearing now spoke of defeat.

The waiter had brought the cold consomme. Harcourt looked down the room.

"It's lucky we ran into them, isn't it?" he said.

"Lucky?"

"Clarifies the situation."

"Yes." That was only too terribly true. "Only I'm sorry there's any situation to clarify."

"I don't thing Stephen Moore will bother us. Good thing for him to marry the little lady. Her father could put a lot of work in Stephen's way."

"I suppose so," said Loueen.

It didn't seem as if this conversation could be real. She hadn't known that life could show itself so ugly.

"But don't you worry. I'll make just as much money as he does."

"I wasn't worrying," she said coldly.

"You needn't my dear—listen—I'll tell you what we've planned for the shop." He did not seem to notice. Now it was he who was pursuing his own train of thought.

SHE knew so well that tone in his voice, she had heard it so often in the little office up the stairs, amid the samples and the account books. Days when his planning had seemed just the prelude to adventure, days when she had worked carried along by his enthusiasms.

Across the room she could see Stephen calling for his bill. In a moment he would be gone. It struck her that it would be good drama to call him over. A man might like to have a say in his own divorce.

Now he was bringing out his note case. She knew that gesture so well. She'd given him the case when they were first engaged. It was a very fine morocco-leather, with his initials in one corner. Once upon a time he used to carry a snapshot of her inside. She wondered where that was now.

Every gesture he made was familiar—the way he brought the change out of his pocket and examined it in the palm of his hand; the way he smiled at the waiter; the way he stubbed out his cigarette; the way he held Fran's chair; the way he held Fran's coat; the way he stood for Fran to pass. Agonisingly familiar.

Just near the door Fran turned and said something and very faintly the echo of their laughter came down the room. So faint that perhaps it was heard by no one but Loueen—or did she hear it? Perhaps what she heard was just the echo of Stephen's laughter in her own heart.

Harcourt also watched them go. "Now, perhaps, you can attend to me," he said.

"Have I ever done anything else? I've been attending to you, Harcourt, for years. I'm not a very good advertisement for your advice. Look where it's got me."

"Yes. Look where it's got you—first a successful business—about to be sold at a profit—and then you marry your manager and live happily ever after."

She laughed a little sadly.

"Trying to rush me, Harcourt?"

"Certainly," he said. "You know me. When I decide it's time, then I want quick action." He laughed. "Remember the night we decided to redecorate—and I had the whole thing done within a week? Remember the night we decided to add manicure and we had the girls working next day?"

"I remember." She remembered it all is if it were in another life.

"And now I want your answer, Loueen."

"I don't love you, Harcourt."

"You let me worry about that. Will you marry me, Loueen?"

"I've got to think it over, Harcourt," she said calmly. She was tough once more. It was only with Stephen that her heart melted.

She was conscious that a woman was crossing the room and making towards them, a woman whose face was vaguely familiar and vaguely distasteful.

"Harcourt, who's that?"

"I know. It's that woman who writes that society nonsense—Benson?"

"No. Not quite. I know, Berison. I remember, I used to meet her at parties."

"She's marked us down."

The next moment, Mrs. Berison was at their side.

"Why, Mrs. Moore, how are you? I haven't seen you since that night at Henley. This is nice. How are you?"

"Oh, I'm very well," said Loueen, and saw with a sinking heart that Mrs. Berison was pulling out a chair as if determined to stay for a long gossip. "May I introduce Mr. Power, my manager."

"How do you do? I know, Beauty-by-the-bottle. I'd forgotten. Mrs. Moore, that you're Madame Loueen, who'd salvage my face." She turned the smart polished countenance of a worldly woman of forty towards her listeners. "Heaven knows it needs it!"

"Not my job any more," said Loueen, in a desperate effort to distract gossip into a safe channel and away from Mr. and Mrs. Moore. "I'm selling out to Mr. Power, and my head assistant."

"Now this is interesting," said Mrs. Berison, enthusiastically. "Do tell me all about it, Mr. Power."

Harcourt measured her swiftly. If he could make the tale attractive she should be good for a little free publicity.

"Well, as a matter of fact Mrs. Berison, it's rather a romantic story."

Loueen interrupted hastily, afraid of Harcourt's personal revelations. "Yes, and as I'm married now I really haven't time for the business." Having put that spoke in Harcourt's wheel she settled down with interest to listen to his romantic story.

"Do tell me," murmured Mrs. Berison. "I hate this unromantic age."

"It's about a little girl called

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Gloria," said Harcourt, not in the least put off his stride. "That kid is lovely. She was just nothing, came of nice, quiet people. But she had woman's best weapon."

Loueen listened enthralled while Harcourt built up the legend of Gloria.

"That's that," Loueen said presently to the bare expanse of Mrs. Berison's departing back.

"She may be quite useful."

"I suppose once you used to tell the Cinderella story about me."

"Oh no. You were the poor little rich girl—tired of a life of moneyed idleness."

"Not particularly true."

He was silent for a moment. He drained his liqueur brandy and stubbed out his cigarette.

"Tell you what, Loueen," he said suddenly, "to-night we'll go dancing. I've never held you in my arms, never kissed you under a full moon. To-night we'll do all those things and then you'll know your answer. I'll take you back to the mews and I'll go and change. Won't take me twenty minutes—and then I'll come back to fetch you. How's that?"

ANYTHING was excellent that postponed the making of a decision. "Good idea," she said.

He called the waiter and paid the bill and his car crossed the empty streets.

"It's only half a moon," she objected.

"Suitable perhaps to a one-sided love affair," he replied.

A chauffeur was washing a car almost at Loueen's door. Another car was parked next to it. Harcourt had to stop his car in the middle of the mews.

Loueen ran up the steps to her flat and opened the door. Then she stood for a moment, arrested on the threshold.

For there was Stephen, standing in the sitting-room before a table on to which a drawer full of sketches appeared to have been emptied.

"Stephen!"

He looked up, startled. "Loueen—I'm sorry."

Now that she saw him nearer she noticed the shadows under his eyes, and that his lips were pinched and his cheeks hollow. Anne had said that she was "a bad wife." Her heart ached inconsolably. She had forfeited the right to make Stephen healthy and happy.

"Why be sorry?" she said.

"I mean I wouldn't have disturbed you. I rang up and as there was no answer I thought it meant that you were out for the evening."

"I'm not stopping." They were talking absurdly, like two very polite strangers.

"Neither am I. I needed that Manchester bank elevation. I left it here on going to a reception at the Institute and I promised to show it to one of the men there."

So they weren't going dancing. Loueen felt absurdly relieved. Absurdly as you'd parted from a man for ever he was pretty sure to spend the rest of his life dancing with someone else, and she was glad all the same.

"And how's Frances?" she forced herself to ask.

"Frances? Oh, she's grand. I was dining with her to-night. She's going to be married."

"Married?"

"Yes, it's been quite a business. An artist chap. Absolutely no money. You know, her father thought she ought to do a lot better than that. I've been acting as a sort of go-between. Finally I won Sir Alister over."

"I see," said Loueen, almost to herself. She couldn't realise it yet.

"Fran should be married. She's essentially the wifely type." By a natural transition of thought he added, "How's your business?"

"It's sold," she said. "Well, the lawyers have still to get together, but for all practical purposes it's sold."

"Sold!" It was his turn to gasp. "But why on earth——"

"Well, lately, I wasn't a great success."

"Who said so?" His tone was truculent.

"Harcourt."

"He's got a nerve."

She shook her head. "You were both right, you know, Stephen. You both said I couldn't run my business and my marriage. Seems I couldn't."

"What was wrong with the way you ran your business? It seemed to take a pretty fair toll of your time and energy."

"That wasn't enough."

"I don't understand."

"I do now, Stephen. I see it all now."

"Well?"

"Time and energy aren't enough. You see once I was married the business hadn't got my heart any more."

"Does it need that too?"

She nodded. "Everything. Sometimes it's seemed to me recently as if the business had a life of its own. It turned against me when I married you. It was like a jealous thing that had been betrayed."

"Who bought it?"

"Gloria—Harcourt."

"But I don't understand. Why did you sell?"

"My hand was forced. They were going to set up in opposition."

There was silence while he took this in. "A lot seems to have happened in the last three weeks."

"Yes—a lot." She could not tell him how her heart had died and hoped and died again. She could not tell him anything. He was like a stranger. "And you?" she said.

"I have been very busy."

"How is the estate?"

"Five houses are finished."

"And now?" she said.

"There are twenty-five more to build."

"I see."

"And you?" he asked.

"Me." She paused a moment. It was better to say it and get it over. "Harcourt wants me to get a divorce and marry him."

"Harcourt!" She had struck a spark at last. The polite stranger was no longer there. This was Stephen in a terrible temper. "But, Loueen, you can't do this."

"Why not?"

"I went away because you didn't love me enough to make me your whole life. I wasn't going to take just what was left. But I'm not going to stand by and see Harcourt take you. That's something else."

"Don't be selfish. You didn't want me. You walked out because I wouldn't go to a party, you didn't give me a chance." Her voice trembled a little.

"It wasn't just the party. You know that. The party was only the culmination of everything. I was tired of sharing my wife with a beauty parlor. But I'll never give you a divorce to marry Harcourt Power—"

The bell sounded and Loueen opened the front door. Harcourt stepped into the sitting-room.

He stopped for a moment, arrested. "The return of the prodigal." Then he swung round to Loueen, smiling, amused, carrying off the situation with perfect composure. "Family joke?"

Loueen shook her head. "I didn't expect this—or did I? Wasn't it you who said it wouldn't happen? Were you perhaps wrong?"

"One comes back in the body—but the spirit?" he said.

How quickly he had sensed the situation, knew that this was no reconciliation meeting. Then for a fleeting moment a smile curved her lips. "Makes a good last act, don't you think?"

"That depends on who is cast for hero."

"My turn to ask 'family joke,'" said Stephen coldly. He had not moved from the position he had taken up on the hearth, but his eyes were still angry.

"Do, please, share our joke," said Harcourt, with irritating politeness. "It was just that you weren't on in this act. Loueen and I had arranged a rather important scene for two. I was asking your wife to marry me."

"So I've heard. But you're too late. I won't give her a divorce."

"Isn't that a little out of date?"

"No, where you're concerned it's just a common precaution."

"You made such a notably successful husband yourself."

"If I've been a failure it's all the more reason why I shouldn't let Loueen be hurt a second time."

"Whether I'd be a failure is not for you to decide."

"In this case it is. Loueen doesn't begin to understand a person like you."

IMPATIENTLY Harcourt said: "Oh, don't be a fool. Loueen knows all about you. She has no illusions. You're the one about whom she had illusions. You're the one who let her down. And I knew Loueen long before you did—and I loved her long before you did."

"In that case why didn't you marry her long before I did? Why did you arrange us such a pretty wedding at St. George's and then do your best to smash it up?"

"You flatter me. I didn't smash your marriage. I only prophesied the smash. You did all the rest yourselves."

"And now I suppose you're going to arrange the pieces in a new pattern."

"That was the idea."

"You make me sick," said Stephen suddenly.

Harcourt shrugged his shoulders.

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"You can't cut people to a mould. It's better to take them the way they are."

"I don't like the way you are."

"That doesn't much matter. The question is does Loueen like it."

"Oh, am I to be consulted?" Loueen put in, "I thought perhaps you were going to decide it between you. You've done quite a lot of that in the past."

"Loueen——" Stephen protested.

"Yes, perhaps it is my turn now." She looked thoughtfully from one to the other. "I tried so hard to keep you both—but you didn't co-operate." She walked to the window and looked at them again. "It was you two who defeated me," she said slowly.

For a moment she could feel impersonal. For a moment she saw them very clearly. They were not the man she loved and the man she might have loved. They were just any two men—Symbolic. Age-old lovers—age-old enemies. She had again a flash of pioneering spirit, a realisation that her fight was part of something bigger than herself.

"What I set out to do wasn't impossible," she said. "But you didn't play fair. You didn't give me a chance."

There was silence. They looked at her, slim and lovely and defenceless, waging the oldest battle in the world. For old as the love of man and woman is the rivalry of man and woman.

"You're right," said Harcourt suddenly.

He saw it now very clearly. They had both meant to bend her to their wills, they had both wanted her for their own ends. He saw it and scented defeat, and Stephen saw it and tasted shame.

"We've come a roundabout way to this place," she said.

"And now?" asked Harcourt.

"Now I have taken my own life back into my own hands."

"That's no good, Loueen."

"To own oneself? You're wrong Harcourt. It's very good."

He shook his head. "You weren't made to live that way. You were made for love."

"I can still give myself," she said very softly. This time it would be different—this time she would understand. She felt very far away from the girl who had married Stephen.

It was Harcourt who jumped into the breach, Harcourt with his quick cut and dried plans, Harcourt who never wasted a moment on the past.

"In all that, Loueen," he said, "I've been wrong. I forced your hand. I apologise, let's start again."

She smiled at him as she might at a precocious child. "Everything comes easy to you, Harcourt — the fault — the confession—the apology—the reconciliation."

"Are we back there?" His smile, too, was indulgent. "Am I again accused of not eating up the scenery?"

She laughed regretfully. "You were given a part to tear a cat in, and you played it like a juvenile lead."

"I'm very good in the role of husband."

She shook her head. "There's no wedding scene."

"But Loueen——"

"Even if I could get a divorce, I wouldn't marry you."

"But why?"

"The simplest reason in the world, Harcourt. I don't want to."

Nobody spoke—Loueen's eyes were on Harcourt. She knew that look when he was momentarily balked. She had seen it so often in the shop if she would not allow him his head about something. She knew how, for a moment, the dark eyes would grow sombre and then thoughtful, and then how the light would come flashing back, as he directed his energies into new channels.

He did so now. The visionary dark eyes saw already new worlds to conquer. He could not have Loueen, well, he would have someone or something else instead. He didn't waste time in regretting. He would push on to something even more exciting. She had a momentary pang of regret that she and Harcourt would never go adventuring together again.

"Sounds pretty final, Loueen."

"It is."

STEPHEN got up from his place by the hearth. "It would be a good idea if you got out of here."

"I think so too. Good-bye, Loueen. I'll be seeing you at the lawyers'."

"Yes, Harcourt, but this is our real good-bye."

He took her hand for a moment and held it. "I shall never love any of my wives as well as I've loved you."

She wrinkled her nose and smiled at him. "You'll never love any woman very well, Harcourt. It isn't in your nature."

"We are as we are made," he said. "I'm just a business man with imagination."

"Personally," said Stephen, "I think you're just a bounder with a swelled head."

Harcourt smiled imperturbably. "Possibly two ways of saying the same thing."

"Ever since we came to this flat, Harcourt, I've been thinking how nice it would be to kick you down our front steps. They're so steep and narrow and the street below is cobbled."

Harcourt shook his head. "Out of keeping. You haven't caught the atmosphere of the drama, has he, Loueen? It's an ironic comedy which ends with nearly everybody being hoist on their own petards."

"All right," said Stephen grimly. "Make your own exit. Only make it quick."

Harcourt walked smilingly to the door. "Perhaps, after all, it's a tragedy." He made a gesture which included them all three. "All the losers," he said. "Good-night."

He closed the door behind him and went unaided down the "nice steep steps." He started up the car and Loueen heard it going down the mews. Three years of her life went with it, three years of gay adventure that had ended in tragedy. It was all over.

Stephen stood listening, too, and he did not speak till the noise died away.

"He was right," he said.

"Yes, always," she said dully. "How particularly this time?"

"About you, and the way we treated you."

The ghost of laughter passed her lips. "The bone of contention. It's a queer thing to be."

"He wanted you for a superior saleswoman, I wanted you for a superior housekeeper. We both wrapped it up very nicely, but we didn't do much about wondering just what you wanted. We were trying to order your life. I called it love, he called it business, but the effect was much the same. I can't think why I didn't see it before."

"It doesn't matter," she said. She felt suddenly tired. "We've all grown up. Perhaps it's not too big a price to pay."

"We didn't understand ourselves or our own lives. We didn't know where we'd gone wrong. Night after night at the bungalow I went over it all. How did it begin? Where did we lose our way? I felt bewildered and lonely and desperate, raising homes for other people, with no home of my own. For what we had raised for you and me looked like a pretty little home—but had no foundations."

"That's your department," she said. "What should one do then?"

"I think you select a new site, and begin all over again. Only we must build better."

Suddenly something in Loueen's composure snapped. "Oh Stephen—Oh, my love," she said, and hurled her face in her hands.

In a moment she was in his arms. They were not polite or composed or sensible any more. It was as if a great weight had been lifted, as if the days that had seemed like years were wiped from the calendar.

"Darling—darling," he cried. "Let's build our lives again. I've been a fool. This time it shall be all your way."

She clung to him. She raised her face to his. "My way——?"

"Everything, darling, always."

"I want a home on the site we saw at Finchley. I want babies in the nursery, and dogs in the garden, and you everywhere."

"Honest Injin?"

She nodded. "I've been so lonely," she said. "There wasn't anyone to laugh with, anyone to talk to, anyone to love."

He held her for a moment at arm's length. "I'm going back to the bungalow."

"Stephen—"

"And you're coming too. I'm the kind of man who must have a toothbrush."

There was only half a moon, but it shone with great serenity. It shone over the rutted road, and the half-built houses, and two baths that someone had upended, and over the bungalow where Loueen watched Stephen pack.

And when the case was closed, he came and stood by the window so that the moon could see, and he gathered Loueen close—in his arms.

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